

# THE PRICE OF A WIFE

By JOHN STRANGE WINTER,

Author of "Bootsie's Baby," "The Other Man's Wife," "Only Human," "Aunt Johnnie," "Every Inch a Soldier," "A Magnificent Young Man," "The Truth-Tellers," etc.

COMPLETE.



## LIPPINCOTT'S

( NOVEMBER, 1897 )

### MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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JOHN STRANGE WINTER,

AUTHOR OF "BOOTLES' BABY," "THE OTHER MAN'S WIFE," "ONLY HUMAN,"  
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YOUNG MAN," "THE TRUTH-TELLERS," ETC.

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PHILADELPHIA:  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY.

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# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

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NOVEMBER, 1897.

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## THE PRICE OF A WIFE.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THAT NIGHT OF GRIEF.

**I**NKY darkness, and the sound of a woman sobbing passionately. Not the noisy sobs of a person in a temper, not the uncontrolled expression of hysteria, but the long, deep-drawn, gasping struggles of a soul in bitter pain and anguish.

Would she never stop? Did tears bring no relief to this stricken heart? It would seem not; it would seem not.

There was no other sound, save that of a cart rattling along the street, and now and again the faint crackle of the cinders falling from the grate, from which all glow had long since faded. After a time—for we cannot weep forever—the gasping breaths grew more controlled, and the pitiful sobs ceased; and then Nurse Marion lay quietly in the darkness, thinking deeply.

She had made a mistake in coming into this house. She had cast the happiness of her life upon one die, and it had turned up—blank. Well, it was hard, hard, yes, and something more than hard; but she had done it all for the best, and she must abide by the consequences of her own act and deed, be they what they might. But it was hard,—very hard.

As she lay there, her mind went back over the past ten years, as somehow the human mind is apt to do in times of great and dire trouble. How well she remembered her last summer at home, the dear old home far away in the heart of the blessed country, which she had since heard sneered at as “provincial” by those who knew not its joys and delights! She was barely seventeen then, fresh from her simple German school, where the wildest excitement that ever came in the way of the pupils was some little mark of favor from the governess just then most subject to that particular form of homage which the Ger-

mans call *Schwärmerei*. What innocent fun had been hers during that long, lovely summer, when, as the daughter of the principal doctor in the neighborhood, she had joined in all the unostentatious pleasures that such a life affords! picnics, tennis-parties, musical evenings, jaunts up the river, sewing-meetings at the rectory, all had been gayety and pleasure to her, who always took more than half her pleasure with her.

So for more than three years longer: then death had stepped in, and all was changed. She recalled it so well,—more vividly during that night of grief than during all the years that had come between. Yes, death had stepped in, and, after an illness so short that they had scarcely realized the presence of danger, the handsome, kindly, genial old doctor, who was called old not by reason of his years but because everybody loved him, was taken away, and his place knew him no more.

It is one of the most common tragedies of English life that those occupying positions of honor and of distinction do not, like their neighbors across the Channel, trouble themselves as to provision for the morrow. I have always thought that there is too much "trust in Providence" about the English character, too much of the lilies of the field, not in that we neither toil nor spin, but in that we take no thought for the morrow that will come for some of us, if not for all.

In this Dr. Brandon had been no exception to the rule. He had made a large income, and he had spent it,—had, in fact, let it slip away with the good-natured ease of a man who finds it hard to say no; and, when all was over, and widow and children had to look hard facts fair and square in the face, they realized that the old pleasant days were gone by forever, that in the future things would be very different with them, and that there was no longer the good, genial, hard-working doctor to stand between them and starvation.

Starvation, did I say? Oh, well, we do not actually starve, we English people who live on our earnings and take no thought for the morrow; we do not even go to the workhouse, at least not very many of us. Yet, if only a few of us drift thus far, there are hundreds, nay, I should rather say thousands and thousands, of delicately nurtured, proud women who have to do as best they can when they suddenly find themselves thrown upon the world, having nothing upon which they can depend beyond their own poor, untaught, untrained, uncongenial exertions.

So it was with the Brandon family. Nurse Marion recalled it all as she lay there thinking in the darkness,—how her mother had looked helplessly from the face of one daughter to the other, and what a pitiful cry had risen to her lips,—“What are we to do? How shall we live? What will become of us?”

Well, it was no uncommon story. The widow suddenly cast from a home of plenty, even of luxury, to existence on a pittance of some sixty pounds a year, soon sank under the burden of poverty and followed the husband whom she had lost. Of the five girls, of whom Marion was the third, all went different ways in life.

Madge, the eldest of them, entered herself at a London hospital,

immediately after her father's death, and, when her term of training was over, went off to Australia, where she felt convinced she might best turn her experience to account. Constance, the second girl, went abroad as governess to a Russian family of distinction. I have said that Marion was the third of the five daughters. Of the two who were her juniors, Rosalie went in for music, and did fairly well as a singer, and Winifred, the youngest of all, who had remained with her mother to the end, married very young, and so has no more to do with this story.

I have spoken of Marion, as she was called in the world, but at home she had always been called Felicity. She had been named Felicity Marion after a godmother who might reasonably have been expected to do great things for her, and somehow the quaint name had always stuck to her in preference to the more sober one of Marion.

"I cannot see," said Mrs. Brandon, vexedly, when the girl first set out from home to begin her training as a nurse, "I cannot see why, because you are going to earn your living, you should abandon your own name and seem as if it were an advantage to try to lose your identity. Your name is Felicity, and you have always been called Felicity. I do not see that the fact of working need alter that."

"No, dear, no, but Marion is my own name too, and it is a very good, useful, every-day sort of name, well fitted for a nurse," Felicity replied. "I would rather keep my home name for my home people. I shall be much happier as Nurse Marion than I could possibly be as Nurse Felicity. It sounds—oh, well, dear mother, just a little pretentious and silly. And I shall be Felicity to you always."

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Brandon, with decision: "I shall never call you anything but Felicity."

Poor soul, she had not called her anything for very long, and since she had gone out into the great silence the girl had been always glad that she was known to the world as Nurse Marion. So she had gone forth from among her kin, so she remained, and it is as Nurse Marion that we find her sobbing bitterly in the dark, then lying crushed and quiet, frozen with a great misery of grief, breaking her heart over the bitter mistakes of her life.

She went back over the past that night as if it were a panorama spread out before her actual vision. How well she could recall her feelings when she found herself alone, strange and not a little shy, the last-joined probationer of a great London hospital! There is something so romantic and alluring to the young mind in the very name of nurse; and yet when a girl fresh from the home atmosphere finds herself fairly started on that particular career, she finds that there is very little gilding on the gingerbread, that it is an existence hard, sordid, and very uncomfortable, and she must endure it uncomplainingly ere she can reckon herself among those who are sometimes called lay sisters of mercy. So it was with Felicity Brandon.

Yet she was a girl of strong will and indomitable courage, and she was fired by a determination to allow no drawbacks, such as discomfort and matters of distaste, to check her on her way. She was blessed with good health and had a sunny and charming disposition, and her face was as bright as a May morning.

She was a favorite in her hospital,—oh, yes, of that there was no doubt. Looking back, she remembered how sorry every one had been to part with her when her three years of training were over. How many little gifts she had received!—priceless possessions to one who valued the good opinion of her fellows. How sorry they had all seemed! how many regrets had been spoken, from the great surgeons and physicians down to the youngest probationer who had scarcely got over her awe of her seniors!

And then she had really gone out into the world. Like all grief-stricken minds, hers flew off at a tangent hither and thither in this bitter review of her past. She remembered once going to nurse an old lady in one of the most fashionable West End squares. By some circumstance she had been so unlucky as to offend the butler,—an old servant of some twenty years' standing,—and he had flatly refused to do anything to serve her. "If Nurse Marion wants coals," was his fiat, "Nurse Marion can fetch coals; if Nurse Marion requires trays from down-stairs, Nurse Marion can fetch trays from down-stairs."

She looked back as if it were yesterday, remembering how contemptuous she had felt where some would have been angry. "If I were to tell Sir Charles what you say," she said to the serving-man, "I don't think you would stay in this house very long. If her ladyship were not so very ill, I should tell Sir Charles; as it is, I am not going to risk my patient's life in order that you may have your deserts."

Why had that man hated her so much? The question was of no vital interest to her that night; the event had been but a small one in her life; and yet she puzzled over it as she lay in the dark, thinking, thinking over the past.

And, after all, he had been sufficiently punished,—punished by himself, too. For one day when Lady Anstruther was getting over the worst, a lady called to see Marion. This lady happened to be the wife of the squire of the dear old home where Dr. Brandon had lived and died, and great was her astonishment on being told with a lordly wave of the hand that visitors for Nurse Marion must go to the area door.

"Very good," said Lady Mary, who was a person never at a loss for a reply. "Is Sir Charles Anstruther at home? Yes? Then say that Lady Mary Waring wishes to see him."

The punishment was short and sharp,—an hour's notice to clear out of the house where he had lived for twenty years. Nurse Marion remembered distinctly how hard she had begged Sir Charles to reconsider his decision, and how entirely she had failed to move him.

"No, nurse," he said; "Williams has shown himself in his true colors, and my wife's life is hanging upon the way in which she is nursed. If her nurses are broken down by want of proper attention, nothing can save her. Pray say no more about it."

After all, they had not been unhappy years. She had met with many kindnesses, had been constantly at work, and had more than once been able to help her sisters on their way. Then there came a day, just two years before that night of tribulation, when she had been

sent at a moment's notice by her institution to nurse a serious hunting accident. It was then that she and Laurence Murgatroyd had first met.

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CHAPTER II.

## LAURENCE MURGATROYD.

THAT accident of Laurence Murgatroyd's turned out an eventful one for her. It was a very difficult case, long, tedious, and full of anxiety; then, when Mr. Murgatroyd was beginning to get about again, he told her what every woman likes to hear, that he could not live without her, that although, as he put it, he was no "catch," he would never know another moment's peace unless she would promise to be his wife.

And of course she so promised.

At first he had, apparently, been contented enough to look forward to that some day which all lovers firmly believe in; then, as he grew stronger and began to see the effect that his nurse had upon the friends who came to the farm-house where he had been carried after the accident, to see him, he also began to realize that when she was no longer nursing him she might at any moment be sent out to attend a similar case, or at least a similar patient, and he began to be impatient of her profession, to fret and fume and rail against fate, against everything but her. And at last, when he could stand it no longer, he insisted on her breaking the chains which bound her.

"Look here, my darling," he said to her, one day, "I know it's very grand and noble, this nursing, and all that, and of course I admire you awfully for it, both for your pluck and your skill and for your uncomplaining endurance, and I shall always love you better that I happened to meet you in that way; but—but, at the same time, the day has gone by for all that sort of thing. Why, my dearest, you might be sent out to some other fellow who had been smashed up."

"Of course I might," she replied.

"Well, I don't like it; I don't like it at all. By Jove, the chap might even fall in love with you."

"It's not impossible," she said, smiling.

"Why, you might be sent to some fellow of my own regiment. By Jove, the doctor might even insist on having you. And the fellow would be safe to fall in love with you."

"Nonsense! None of my patients have fallen in love with me before."

"It would be beastly."

"Not at all; no more than it was to have to come to you."

"Yes, but you were not engaged when you came to me: it does make a difference."

"I must live," said she, quietly.

"Yes, I know; and that's the hard part of it. Look here, my dear, dear little quaint girl, with your old-world name and your semi-puritan garb, I am going to make a proposal to you. You may not

like it; it may even make you rather angry with me; but I want you at least to think it well over: don't say 'no' in a hurry. I'll make a clean breast of the whole past. You know I've been a bit of an ass in my time,—most fellows in the service are, sooner or later,—I got dipped, and when I expected my father to pay up my debts (because, after all, I have never had much of an allowance, though I'm the eldest son and all that) he was furious. I believe that men who have made their money in business and by their own efforts are mostly very intolerant of every life that happens to be a bit different from their own: at all events, I know that he is. He began life with nothing,—twopence-ha'penny and a pair of clogs, I believe,—and, though he is as rich as *Cresus*, he is as near and as saving as—as—the grave. So, when he found that I was dipped, he told me that he would pay my debts, but that he should expect me to retrieve my folly by marrying a woman with money. Now, I don't happen to like women with money. I can't help it, I believe it is constitutional with me, but it is none the less a remarkable fact that I have never yet seen the woman with money that I should like to sell myself to. Now, all this happened, my dearest, before I had ever seen you or heard of you, before I had ever been really in love in my life. So I glibly promised that I would look for money, though without having the very smallest intention of doing it. Of course it is always easy to stave off an evil day, and if my old father likes to spend his time hunting up heiresses for me, why, it is an amusement for him, and it is quite easy for me to find some objection to them. Therefore, up to now, I have never troubled myself about his little weakness for the acquisition of money, but have gone on exactly as I have done before. One result of this was that I soon found myself more heavily in debt than ever. I am not a bit ashamed of my debts,—not a bit. I have never had a proper allowance, such as a man in an expensive cavalry regiment ought to have and requires to have, especially when he is known to be the son of an enormously rich father. I have done nothing outrageous; I've not painted the town red, nor wasted money over women, nor even thought about racing; but I'm in debt, and out of debt I cannot get without my father's intervention. So, you see, dearest, I am more or less tied to the old man, I am more or less in bondage. I mean, I cannot very well go to him and say that I have got engaged to a girl who has to work for her living. He is like all people who have been the architects of their own fortunes: he has no opinion of those who are not at the top of the ladder. So there I am; but I simply cannot stand the idea of your possibly being sent out again as you were sent to me, and I want you to make a sacrifice for me, not a very great one as circumstances are with you: I want you to consent to our being married quietly and to living out of sight until—er—well, until things adjust themselves."

"You mean until your father dies?" said Marion.

"Well, I did not intend to put it in that cold-blooded way, dearest," Laurence Murgatroyd replied. "But, you see, my father married late in life, he is getting on in years, and of course he cannot live forever. I would not, heaven knows, shorten the old gentleman's life by so

much as a single hour, for I am exceedingly fond of him ; still, when he does go, he cannot take his money with him, and I feel that nobody has a better right to it than I,—I, who feel that nobody has a better right than I have to arrange my own marriage."

"But don't you think," said she, "that he would hear reason? Would the fact that we are in love with each other have no weight with him?"

"Not the very least in the world," replied Laurence Murgatroyd, promptly: "so you may put any such idyllic notion out of your dear little head, sweetheart, now and forever. No, my father is a real good sort, sturdy, honest, upright, just—and as hard as flint. He boasts that his word is as good as his bond: I'm sure I wish to goodness it wasn't."

"Laurence?" she cried.

"Yes. I know what you mean, but I did not speak quite as you take it; but you know when an old gentleman says to a boy, 'If you cough again, I'll flog you,' that is what I call the word and the bond business being a ghastly nuisance. Now, if my father once said to me that certain effects would follow certain causes, he would keep his word, even if it killed him—and me! He has already told me that I must marry a young woman with money, and no proposal that I could make to him, no persuasions, no protestations, would move him to letting me off that part of the bargain. If I openly marry—well, my darling, you, for instance, he would at once make a new will and leave every farthing to my brother."

"I did not know that you had a brother," Marion said.

"No? Well, I don't often talk about him. I have a brother all the same, and a regular bad hat he is. He has been a wanton and a spendthrift ever since he went into knickerbockers. In fact, there is nothing bad, short of actual criminality, that Geoffrey has not done at some time or other. My father allows him four hundred a year so long as he remains in Australia, and even that is paid to him monthly, so that he cannot slip over here betweenwhiles. He has declared his intention of leaving him as much for his life, but no more, and I'm bound to say Geoffrey deserves no better; yet the old man's nature is so extraordinary, and so tenacious of its own way, that he would think nothing of recalling Geoffrey and making him the heir if I were to disappoint him by marrying a girl without a dowry."

"And yet you propose to marry me!" she cried.

"Well, dear, if I am safely married to you I cannot possibly marry any one else."

"It would be deceiving your father."

"Only because I feel that my father is asking an unreasonable thing of me. I feel that I am justified in deceiving him so far. After all, marriage is a very personal sort of business, and by and by, when my father is gathered to his rest, poor old gentleman, it won't matter to him whether I have married a woman with money or not, whereas it will make all the difference in the world to me."

"Yes, there is something in that," she admitted.

The discussion ended as such discussions usually do. It was against

the girl's open and honest nature to do anything so underhand as to marry a man secretly and against his father's wishes ; but Laurence Murgatroyd had inherited a very persuasive tongue from his Irish ancestors. He argued that his father's objection was not a personal one, and therefore it did not count ; he urged that if he could but see her he might take the greatest possible fancy to her. Besides that, he declared again and again that his father had no right to arrange his son's life, and that he was perfectly justified in planning his affairs so as to cause the least amount of annoyance to his father with the largest chance of happiness to himself.

Finally Marion consented, and the two were married in an out-of-the-way London church, where nobody, not even the old clergyman who performed the ceremony, took much notice of them, and Nurse Marion became lost to the world which had been hers beforetime, and took up a new life as the wife of Laurence Murgatroyd.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### HOLLOW COTTAGE.

LOOKING back from the stand-point of that night of grief, it seemed to her that for a time she had been mad with happiness. The fact that old Mr. Murgatroyd never ceased to worry his son on the subject of his matrimonial future only served to heighten the joys of their wonderful secret.

Marion, of course, never showed herself in the town in which her husband's regiment was quartered, even taking the precaution to do her shopping in a town which lay a dozen miles in the opposite direction. She lived in a lovely cottage half a mile from a village railway station that was just five miles from Blankhampton, where the 150th was quartered. She had one staid and trustworthy servant, whom she had taken with her from London, a comfortable person who knew her only as Mrs. West, and who confidently believed Mr. West to be on what she was pleased to call "the road."

"Simmons thinks you travel in tea, Laurie," she said to her husband one day. "It is very funny to think of your travelling in tea, isn't it?"

"It is rather by way of being a shock to me, dearest," Murgatroyd replied. "But, when you come to think of it, under our circumstances such a supposition is eminently safe. If Simmons is asked any questions, she will be able to tell a lie quite truthfully and so put the curious fairly off the scent. I should encourage the idea, Marion. Still, it is distinctly funny, not so much my travelling in tea, for with my parentage I might be anything, but to think of you being married to such a position."

Of course their life was not all sunshine : what life ever is ? There were days when Murgatroyd was on duty and could not get out to Hollow Cottage at all ; there were other days when he was obliged to show himself socially, other days on which he hunted, or shot, or fished ;

and at such times Marion was terribly dull. She had no neighbors, no friends. The village was about a mile on the other side of the railway, and the inhabitants never thought of calling on her. Only the shy young curate found his way to Hollow Cottage, asking her if she would like to take up some parish work. Marion said "no" in such a decided tone that the poor little man never ventured to go near her again.

Yet, in spite of everything, Marion was madly, deliriously happy. She was always feverishly delighted when Laurence came, and he, on his side, always professed himself as grudging every hour spent away from her. And yet things did not altogether go smoothly.

For one thing, there was always the want of money in the modest little establishment. You see, when a man has not an income sufficient to supply his own wants, and he suddenly takes upon himself the burden of a wife, no matter how economically, even humbly, that wife lives, she cannot help but be a burden. The income that is not enough for one will not stretch itself to provide for two simply because those two are happier together than they would be apart. So, by the time the year had gone by, Laurence Murgatroyd had begun to feel very acutely indeed the pinch and inconvenience of poverty.

As he explained to Marion, it was impossible for him to alter his style of living in the regiment, and it was useless for him to expect any increase of his allowance from his father. He was more in love with Marion than ever, but love does not pay the butcher or the baker, love will not pay the dressmaker and the tailor, love costs money instead of making it; and at last there came a desperate day when Laurence Murgatroyd told his wife that something must be done.

"Laurie," she cried, in desperation, "why, why don't you make a clean breast of it to your father?—tell him everything? Surely he married for love himself? You have told me that he is fond of saying that he married on a hundred and fifty pounds a year: would not that weigh with him?"

"No, honestly I don't think that it would," Murgatroyd answered. "Probably, if it were put before him, he would argue in this way: His father provided him with nothing, he has provided me with everything, with all that I have; he would probably feel that he owed nothing to his father, and as I do owe everything to him he would consider himself perfectly justified in expecting me to be guided entirely by his wishes. He has expressed himself very strongly on the subject already, and, as you must have seen by his letters, he has no notion of giving up his original intention that I must marry money. Each time that I have been home since the unfortunate day that he paid my debts, he has trotted out heiresses of all sorts for my delectation. The first one I resolutely declined on the ground of a squint; the second had red hair; the third was dicky as to her *h's*, which he seemed to think was a very small and frivolous objection. But he writes now that he wants me to go and look at another one, a real beauty this time and no mistake about it."

"And what excuse are you going to make this time?" Marion asked, a smile dimpling over her face in spite of the gravity of the situation.

"That is precisely what I don't know. I suppose I shall get out of it some way or other; anyway, I must."

"Yes, I am afraid, my poor Laurie, that you must," Marion rejoined, her eyes dancing. "Even for a beauty-heiress I cannot do away with myself."

"Heaven forbid that you should suggest such a thing, even in jest," he said, in horror. "However, I must try to get a few days' leave, that I may go home and find *some* fault with the lady. The most important question of all is, how on earth are you and I going to keep body and soul together? I really am desperately hard up. I had a letter from my tailor this morning saying that if I do not pay up my bill pretty soon he will place the matter in other hands. You know what that means, of course?"

"I have an idea. Is it a large bill?"

"Pretty big. Eighty pounds or so. It might as well be eight hundred, for all the means I've got of paying it. And then there's the rent of this little place! It's not much, but it's due; by Jove, it's over-due. And you tell me the excellent Simmons is expecting to be paid. I don't know how on earth we are going to do it. And not only that, but all the time I have a hateful feeling that it's all so hard on you, that I have taken you out of a life by which at least you were able to supply your wants and to hold your head up as high as any, and have condemned you to a life of secrecy, an underhand, hateful way of living."

Marion turned and caught hold of both his hands. "Laurie," she said, impetuously, "tell me one thing,—tell me true and plain. Are you happy when you are with me?"

"Marion!"

"Really happy?" she persisted.

"Yes, really happy. You are all the world to me: surely you know it. But it is no use my trying to hide from you that I should be much happier if I could take you among my fellows and introduce you to everybody as my wife, if I could dress you as you ought to be dressed, and give you the kind of surroundings which are your right."

"No, you are wrong there, Laurie," she said, gravely. "I have no rights. I don't deserve anything better than I have got, no, nor anything half as good. You love me, and that is sufficient for me; it is more than I ought to have. I never ought to have consented to this secret marriage: I knew that it was wrong, and yet I had not strength enough to resist the temptation. Evil is bound to come of it, and I shall not be a bit surprised if it ends by wrecking all your prospects, and then you will hate me."

"Hate you? Nonsense! nonsense! I couldn't hate you if I tried. I shall always love you just the same: only I don't see the good of throwing away my only chance of providing for you properly by not taking precautions for a time now. By the bye, dearest, I want you to be very careful in what you do and where you go, just now."

"To be careful, Laurie? Why?"

"Because that ass Desmond saw you yesterday."

"Desmond? Who is he? How did he know anything about me?"

"He doesn't know anything about you so far, but he saw you. We were in a shop together yesterday in Blankhampton and saw you go past. I felt in a minute that your having ventured into Blankhampton was a mistake. 'That's a pretty girl,' said he; 'I wonder who she is? Old chap, I'm going after her.' I told him not to be an ass, that you would probably be awfully offended if you knew that he was following you; but he listened to me no more than he would have listened to a little dog yapping, and bolted up the street after you."

"Oh, that was Mr. Desmond, was it?" Marion cried. "I rather thought he had the look of a soldier."

"Why, what made you notice him?"

"Because he spoke to me."

"Spoke to you?"

"Yes. Oh, he was civil,—quite civil. He took off his hat and said it was a long time since he had seen me, and when I told him I did not know him he expressed great surprise, and said, 'Surely it is Mrs. Ferguson?' I said in a chilly tone that I was not Mrs. Ferguson, and he took the hint and left me."

"Mrs. Ferguson!" Laurence Murgatroyd repeated. "Then I suppose you thought he really had mistaken you?"

"Of course I did."

"Oh! Well, my dear, you are not safe any longer in this neighborhood. How am I to go home for a week and leave you to the pestilential attentions of an ass like Desmond?"

"My dear boy," said Marion, promptly, "I assure you I can quite well take care of myself: don't worry on that score."

"I believe," he said, presently, "that if I could introduce you to my father without his knowing that you had anything to do with me, you would win him over to our side in spite of himself."

"What?" Marion cried, gayly: "would you send me into the house to nurse him? Oh, Laurie, do you think such a stale old trick would work properly?"

"To nurse him? No, I wasn't thinking of that. He is not ill; he never is. If he were, I believe you would be able to do pretty much what you chose with him, in spite of his love of money and his passion for his word and his bond. He is a very impressionable old gentleman, and tremendously susceptible to womanly charms. I should not like him to fall ill, but if he did—by Jove, that's a good idea of yours."

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#### CHAPTER IV.

##### FAILURE.

IN due course of time Laurence Murgatroyd got a few days' leave and went home, writing daily to Marion, and pouring great scorn upon the pretensions to beauty possessed by his father's latest discovered heiress. "I am afraid," he wrote, "that the poor old gentleman is exceedingly wild with me. He says that he cannot imagine what I

really do want. I took the opportunity of informing him, as pleasantly as I could, that I wanted to be let alone and to have a little more money. However, he is still rabid on the subject of my marrying money, and not one penny will he hand over."

It is an old saying that many a true word is spoken in jest. If any one had told Marion Murgatroyd three months previously that within one week she would be sojourning under the roof of her husband's father, that she would be wearing her long-discarded uniform, that she would be known as Nurse Marion once more, she would have laughed such an idea to scorn.

And yet how strange truth can be and often is! Three days later than the letter of which I have just spoken, Marion received an urgent message from her husband, a message by telegraph.

"I want you," it said, "to come here immediately. My father is suddenly very ill. I send from Burghley to save time. Wire to me at Murgatroyd Park in name of Nurse M., saying that you are on your way. Will meet you at station and explain all."

Marion had no thought of not complying with her husband's directions. She telegraphed back in the terms suggested by him, donned her gray uniform, packed up the blue linen dresses and white aprons which she had been accustomed to wear when on duty, and in due course of time arrived at the station, which was three miles and a half from Murgatroyd Park. Laurence met her there, and quickly hurried her into a comfortable brougham. As soon as they were off he rapidly explained the extraordinary coincidence which had led to his sending for her in such a strange fashion.

"He was taken ill yesterday,—influenza, of course. He has never been ill in all his life before, and the doctor seems to think he is going to have it badly. He ordered a nurse at once, and as there is not a nurse to be had apparently for love or money, and influenza is simply raging all over the country, I suggested trying to get a nurse from the institution that sent me the only nurse I ever required. Everything has fallen out beautifully: you have only to go in and win. Now you must remember, darling, that you are the same nurse who pulled me through my accident. You had better tell that to the doctor at once; but I don't think you need say anything to my father until you have ingratiated yourself a little with him. I think, on the whole, it was lucky that he only saw me when you were off duty, as it happened."

Ingratiate herself! Looking back but a few hours, it seemed to Marion that she ought to have felt the danger she was running.

Ingratiate herself! She had changed her gray uniform for a blue linen gown, and, looking as dainty as a nurse in a play, she had summoned up all her courage and gone into the room where Mr. Murgatroyd was lying. The sick man turned his head and watched her as she came to the side of his bed, uttering some pleasant commonplace, as is the habit of nurses newly come upon the scene.

His first utterance made her almost jump out of her skin.

"Mrs. Robinson," he said, in a loud, hard tone, "take that young woman away. I'll have no flighty little lasses worrying me. Take her away: I don't like the look of her."

Nurses who are accustomed to going about the world are well used to finding patients who object strongly to their presence; but this is a matter which does not often cause dismay to a really clever nurse, and frequently patients who have begun with every symptom of detestation end by being helplessly dependent upon the very nurses whom once they openly scorned.

In the case of John Murgatroyd, however, such a happy state of affairs did not supervene on the introduction of Nurse Marion into his sick-chamber. From first to last he showed only the most intense dislike of her. There was no earthly reason why he should have done so, but it was nevertheless a fact. He detested her. He informed the doctor in attendance upon him that it was an insult to expect him to submit to the ministrations of a young thing who might be his granddaughter, and in vain did the doctor, who was much troubled at the time by a scarcity of nurses, expostulate with him, and declare that nurses, just then, were not to be had either for love or money.

"I would rather be without a nurse at all," John Murgatroyd growled, indignantly. "I've got plenty of servants."

"But, with the exception of Mrs. Robinson, your servants are all young, Mr. Murgatroyd," the doctor cried. "She is old enough, the Lord knows, but one night is enough to knock her up, and she has neither the experience nor the strength to be of any good. You are very ill, my dear sir, much too ill to be dependent on unskilled and untrained attention. To leave you to your own women-servants is out of the question. I cannot continue in charge of your case if you are going to handicap me by giving me a nurse who does not know a lotion from a tonic."

"I'll never believe," said John Murgatroyd, obstinately, "that yon bit lassie knows aught of such a case as mine. Where is she to learn? *Experientia docet*, doctor,—truer words were never written,—but where is yon bit lassie to have got her experience from?"

"My dear Mr. Murgatroyd," returned the doctor, who was fast losing patience, "yon bit lassie has had three years in a good London hospital. She has been hard at work for several years since then, and she has a sheaf of testimonials such as ought to satisfy even you. And, mind you, there is not a nurse to be had just now, neither far nor near, and half, nay, nine-tenths, of the influenza cases that end fatally do so for want of good nursing. While this plague of influenza is raging all over the country, and the unfortunate nurses get broken down one by one from overwork, it will be more difficult to obtain them. On my word, you ought to think yourself very lucky to get a competent, skilled nurse without a single day's delay. Now be a sensible man, Mr. Murgatroyd,—you know you are a sensible man,—and don't let a mere matter of prejudice spoil your chance of getting over this."

"Well, you may say what you like, doctor, and it may be as you say," said John Murgatroyd, still speaking with extreme indignation, "and there may not be a nurse to be had for love or money, but I don't like it, I tell you; I don't like it at all. I don't like her, and I don't like having her about me,—a bit of a lass like that: it's ridiculous!"

"Why, Mr. Murgatroyd, I really thought you had more sense, I did indeed. Isn't it better to have a bright young thing like that about you than a frowzy old frump who would as soon lay you out as get you through it, ay, and perhaps sooner, for the matter of that? Don't talk nonsense, Mr. Murgatroyd, but just lie there and devote your energies to getting well, and be thankful that you're not left to the tender mercies of an old lady who can't keep her eyes open for an hour together."

A few days went by, but John Murgatroyd in no way got over his first prejudice against Nurse Marion. "I do wish, Laurie," he said fretfully to his son one day when he was sitting in the sick-room and Nurse Marion was off duty,— "I do wish you'd send that lass away."

"What lass?" asked Laurie.

"Why, that slip of a girl tricked out in her cap as if she was a sort of a nun. I don't like her, and, what is more, she doesn't like me."

"Oh, that's sheer nonsense," exclaimed Laurie.

"No," the old man declared, "it is not nonsense. She looks at me as if she expected me to throw things at her; and I quite expect, Laurie, that I shall end by doing it."

"Well, you see, father, you were very rough on her when she first came. You called out that they were to take her away, just as if she was a perfect nightmare. And, of course, she's young, and young people don't like that kind of treatment. You don't give the poor girl a chance. She feels you don't like her; and indeed you make yourself so deuced clear on that point that there's no chance of her making any mistake about it. And, after all, when she is trying to do her best for you, don't you think it's very rough on her?"

"No, I don't," said Mr. Murgatroyd, who even in his best days had never been able to look at any question except from his own standpoint, and who was certainly in no wise softened by his illness; "I like a nice, comfortable, middle-aged nurse, and I don't like so much of that ridiculous cap and bib business."

"My dear old dad," said Laurie, "as long as you get thoroughly well looked after, what does it matter whether your nurse wears a cap or doesn't? I am sure Nurse Marion is very nice and very kind, and always anxious to do everything for her patient that is possible. Why, when she nursed me——"

"What?" cried the old man.

"When she nursed me. What! didn't you know? Why, of course; she was the nurse who pulled me through that big smash I had at Danford. I always found her most kind and untiring, most attentive in every way; and when that sciatica came on with the influenza, and poor old Mrs. Robinson had no more notion than a pussy-cat how to cope with it, I naturally got the same nurse that I had found so good. I—I thought it such luck that she was able to come; though, of course, if I had known that you would take against her in this foolish way, I'd have left it all alone. But how was I to know?" he went on, vexedly.

"Oh, I dare say I am prejudiced," John Murgatroyd admitted,—

and it was no small admission for a man who prided himself on never changing his mind,—“but I like an older woman. I don’t like flighty young girls. I’m no match for ’em.”

“How do you mean, no match?” asked his son.

“Oh, you know what I mean. I don’t feel safe with a bit of a lass like that. Why, she might take it into her head to marry me.”

At this suggestion, thus naively put, Laurence Murgatroyd sat back in his chair and laughed aloud. “My dear old dad,” he cried, at last, “you really do beat everything in the way of a joke that ever I came across. The idea of such a notion ever entering your head at your time of day, as ill as you are! Well, well! the vanity of old gentlemen! there’s no end to it. On my word, you beat everything. Look here, now: if Nurse Marion comes any of the marrying dodge over you, just you send for me, and I’ll soon put matters right, I promise you. But do, my dear dad, make up your mind to put up with her for a bit. It never does to swap horses when you’re crossing the stream.”

“I don’t like putting up with her, Laurie,” the old man persisted. “She’s got no wit, and she’s so nervous and so unhandy; her fingers are all thumbs. She always speaks to me as if she expects I am going to throw the first thing that comes handy at her head. She’s a deal too much of a fine lady for my taste, and she gives me the idea of not being a real nurse, somehow. I wish you’d send her away.”

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## CHAPTER V.

### HARD TO BEAR.

As the days crept on, the old man’s antipathy to Marion became more and more pronounced, until finally he would not, if any one else were near, take anything from her hand or allow her to wait upon him in any way. And at last Marion implored her husband to let her leave Murgatroyd Park.

“Laurie,” she said, piteously, “I have done my very best; indeed I have. He won’t have me at any price: he won’t take anything from me: he is full of hatred and suspicion of me. I believe he thinks I want to poison him. I cannot stand it any longer: let me go away.”

“You can’t go away and leave him without a nurse,” Laurie replied, savagely. “The poor old man is desperately ill; you know that as well or better than I do.”

“He is better than he was, Laurie,” she urged; “and every hour that I stay here only retards instead of helping his recovery.”

“Why on earth can’t you manage to ingratiate yourself a little with him?” he went on, not heeding her words; “you have a chance,—or had; never had any woman a better. And now, when everything is hanging on it, you must needs give in. It’s the first time I have ever asked you to do anything for me,—and you have failed.”

Marion turned and looked at him. It was the first time that he had ever spoken to her otherwise than in gentleness and love; and as

she stood there eying him, an awful and a horrible thought came into her mind that after all he was the son of his father. "Laurie," she said, "I have done my best."

"And a very poor best, too," he burst out. "Well, I suppose I shall have to send up to town and try to get somebody else: you leave me no choice. But don't shut your eyes to one main fact: you will never have such a chance again. If you cannot contrive to get hold of the old man now, you will never do it, and Geoffrey will have everything. It is hard lines, for, except in this matter, I've stuck to him through thick and thin. And it's harder, even, when I have risked so much and given up so much for you, that you cannot do a little thing like this for me. No, by Jove, not for me, but for us both."

"Laurie," she cried, desperately, "you don't mean to imply that I have not done my best, tried my hardest, to win your father over? Why, when I came here I was ready to do anything for him; you know that. But he is dead against me, dead against me! The truth is, he sees through me,—not that I'm your——"

"Hush-sh-sh!" he exclaimed, looking round apprehensively.

"But he knows I'm no ordinary nurse," she went on; "he feels it. Instinct is very strong with him, and I suppose my anxiety has made my face telltale. Anyway, it is doing us more harm than good for me to stay here; indeed it is."

"Oh, I dare say it is not pleasant for you," he said, vexedly.

"You have no right to speak to me like that," she said, with a certain dignity which told him, vexed as he was, that she was deeply wounded; "you have no right to speak to me like that, nor yet to throw at me that you have run risks and given up some things for my sake. I too have made sacrifices for you. I gave up my honest living. I never asked you to give anything up for me: no, the asking was all on your side; but you do not hesitate to throw it at me all the same."

"Oh, I dare say I have been a fool. I'm not the first fellow who has made a fool of himself," Laurence Murgatroyd cried, savagely. "However, we have tried our little scheme and it has failed. So there is nothing more to be done. The best thing you can do is to get away; but you cannot in decency go until we have found a substitute for you: no nurse would. But don't expect me to say that I'm glad you're going, or that I think you are doing the right thing, or that you have managed this business well, because I don't. You had a good chance, and you have lost it."

They were together in the library, a superb apartment, in which she had sought him after an unusually difficult hour with the old man, in order to tell him of her determination to go. She was standing by the great table of carved oak, her face white with distress, her eyes dark with pain, her whole person and attitude indicative of hesitancy and trouble. She stood still by the table; he, on the contrary, was walking restlessly about the room, his hands thrust deep down into his pockets, his face in the blackest frown that Marion had ever seen it wear.

"You are not angry with me, Laurie?" she said, at last, in imploring tones.

"Angry!" he repeated, roughly. "No, I'm not angry, but I'm disappointed, and vexed, and sore."

"Not with me, Laurie?"

"Yes, with you. It is no use lying to you or pretending otherwise, which would be a lie. I am disappointed. I made sure you would pull off this business properly. But there, just like a woman, you must let everything slide because an old man who is sick and full of crotchets shows you the rough side of his tongue. One hears a good deal about you nurses being angels of patience, and hours of ease, and all that rot, but, by Jove, when one wants you to do something a bit out of the ordinary, one soon finds out how mortal you are, after all."

"I have never pretended to be anything but mortal," said Marion, drawing back a little and holding herself very stiffly. "So, Laurence, as I don't want to have this kind of argument again, I will tender my formal notice as your father's nurse. Will you be good enough to fill up my place as soon as possible?"

He turned and looked at her, and it must be admitted that for once Laurence Murgatroyd, though in general a singularly good-tempered person, was in a towering passion.

"And is that all?" he asked.

"All? Yes, that is all. Unfortunately, I cannot," said Marion, with a miserable frozen kind of dignity, "tender my notice to *you*."

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## CHAPTER VI.

### PUTTING ON THE TIME.

MARION had certainly never since her marriage looked so like the Nurse Marion of old as when, with her head held well up in the air, she turned and walked out of the great library at Murgatroyd Park. She closed the door very quietly behind her, and felt, poor girl, that she was closing the door on all her brightest hopes of existence.

If she could have gone straight away then and there, it would not have seemed so hard; but that course was impossible. Old Mr. Murgatroyd was still very ill, and, whether he liked or disliked her, she was compelled to minister to him in quite the usual way, which was, as a matter of course, just as she would have done if she had found herself fully appreciated by him.

She went straight up to the sick-room, busied herself with various small occupations, and then went towards the bed, carrying with her some medicine in a glass. "It is time for your medicine, Mr. Murgatroyd," she said, in as cheerful a tone as she could assume.

"Where is Mrs. Robinson?" was his ungracious retort.

"Mrs. Robinson is in bed with the influenza, and is very ill," said Marion, promptly.

"Since when?"

"Since last night. I'll fetch her, if you like, but it will be her death if she comes," said Marion, in a chilly tone.

"Why wasn't I told?" ignoring her remark.

"By way of sparing your feelings, I believe," said Marion, standing still and eying him with distant and disdainful gaze. "And if the poor old lady does die, you will have the satisfaction of knowing, sir, that you had a good hand in killing her."

"What d'ye mean?"

"Just what I say. Your son brought me here at great inconvenience to myself, and you have pretty well worried your old house-keeper's life out by your ridiculous hatred of me. You must forgive me for speaking plainly, Mr. Murgatroyd, but your hatred of me is ridiculous. Do you think it was any pleasure to me to come hundreds of miles to nurse a cross old man, who snarls at one with every moment as if one was a dog, or he was? You are very ill, but you've got a first-class nurse, to whom a bit of a case like this is mere child's play. Why can't you be content, and spend your energy in trying to get well, instead of setting your wits to work and trying to make me miserable? If I were a man in your position, I shouldn't think nurse-baiting a good enough amusement."

The old man turned his head uneasily on his pillows and fixed his hard, keen gaze on Marion's scornful face. "You've a sharp tongue of your own, young woman," he remarked, at last.

"I need it with you, Mr. Murgatroyd," was her quick retort. "And, by the bye, you may be glad to hear that I went down just now to see Mr. Laurence" (Laurence Murgatroyd was always called so in his father's house), "and I told him that he must look out for another nurse with as little delay as possible. So you will soon be rid of me; only, while I am here, don't you think you may as well let me make myself as useful as I can?"

"You went and saw Laurence? You gave him notice?" the old man exclaimed.

"I did."

"And why to Laurence? Why not to me? Is my son master of this house?" John Murgatroyd demanded.

"I don't know, I'm sure. I do know that Mr. Laurence engaged me to nurse you, and I did not suppose that you would wish to be writing letters just now. I don't quite see how you are to do it. Mr. Laurence said nothing about being master. I suppose he is doing his best for you. He seems anxious enough, anyway."

"Anxious? Ay, he's a good lad, my Laurence, a good lad," was the old man's unexpected remark.

"Don't you think you had better take your medicine?" said Marion.

"Here, give it to me." And John Murgatroyd drained the glass without further ado, then lay back again among his pillows and eyed Marion curiously. "What did he say?" he asked, at last.

"Who? your son?"

"Who else were we speaking of? What did he say when you told him you were going?"

"He was vexed, of course; equally of course, he blamed me for not having made myself more agreeable to you," Marion replied, without hesitation.

"Oh, he did?"

"Need you ask? Is not the woman always wrong?" said Marion, bitterly.

"It doesn't matter what Laurence said," said the old man, still more uneasily.

"Not the very least in the world," responded Marion, with a cheerfulness which was a little overdone.

"Laurence has nothing to do with it: it's no fault of his that you and I don't get on. I—I—hope—at least, I would rather——"

"It is not worth talking of," said Marion. "I am going away as soon as I can be replaced. But for the present Mrs. Robinson, poor old soul, is very ill, and cannot look after you. Don't you think you had better put up with me till you get somebody else better?"

"Perhaps." It was ungraciously said, but still it was a consent, and a distinct one.

"I know your leg is very painful to-night; I can see it in every line of your face. Come, let me give it a good rub with the lotion."

"It does hurt pretty badly," he admitted.

"Sciatica is agony, or most people think so," said Marion. "Anyway, it is as near to agony as any one need want to go. And when it comes on with influenza it is unbearable."

"She doesn't rub that way," he grumbled.

"Perhaps not. Don't you think you had better try my way?" said Marion, with a smile. It was a smile covering a breaking heart, but the old man, brimfull of his aches and pains and prejudices, saw nothing of that. He was only filled with satisfaction to think that the "young thing" was going, and he was therefore more inclined to be tolerant towards her than he would have been if he had not known of the interview with Laurence, and that Mrs. Robinson, poor old soul, was fast in the grip of the same illness as himself.

So Marion, given a fair field, rubbed the poor tortured leg into something like comfort, and John Murgatroyd for once submitted to her ministrations without the usual growls and snarls of disfavor.

He was just settled again when Laurence came into the room. "Well, dad, how are you feeling now?"

"A bit better," answered the old man. "You never told me that Mrs. Robinson was ill."

"I thought it would worry you, and that perhaps you would never miss her," Laurence answered.

"You must take me for a regular fool, then," John Murgatroyd growled.

"Oh, no, I don't; but sick people don't notice every one that comes and goes."

"Yon lass tells me she's going."

"Yes, I believe she is."

"You believe? Don't you know? Haven't you written for another?"

"Not yet. You forget, dad, that the post goes out at five o'clock. I'll write in the morning."

"And be sure you say I want a nice, comfortable, middle-aged

person," said John Murgatroyd. "I don't like these bits of young things about me. Not but what she's done better to-night."

"You must give her another chance," said Laurence, in his easiest tones.

"Nothing of the sort," sharply. "She doesn't like me any better than I like her. It's best for us to part."

"Much the best," put in Marion, coldly.

"Oh, as you like, of course. I'll write the first thing in the morning."

As a matter of fact, Laurence Murgatroyd, urged by some expression in Marion's face, did more than write in quest of another nurse the following day. He despatched a special messenger to the nearest town and sent a telegram to the only nursing institution which he knew of, asking whether there was a nurse to be had or not. Within a couple of hours the answer came back, "Regret, not a single nurse in. Patients waiting ten deep."

This reply he carried to the old man. "You see, dad," he said, "that there really is a great difficulty in getting nurses: they're simply not to be had."

"H'm! I see."

"I can't think why you need have taken such a dislike to Nurse Marion," Laurence went on, vexedly. "Such luck as it was to get her, too! Patients waiting ten deep, you see. Not, I dare say, that she would consent to stay now. I wouldn't, if I were she, after the way you've treated her."

"Pooh!"

"Ah, that's what you rich people always think,—that you can buy everything you want with money. You can't always do it, and money is not quite the power you think it."

"She'd stay fast enough. I'd be sorry to ask her, if I didn't want her."

"Perhaps so. She's our only hope at present."

"I dare say," the old man admitted.

Laurence Murgatroyd looked at his father keenly. "Dad," he said, "you don't feel just as you did about her. You're getting over your prejudices."

"Oh, the wench has got a spirit, and I like her the better for it," John Murgatroyd flashed out.

"A spirit? how do you know?"

"Because she dropped onto me last night for not liking her. Ay, she let me have it properly, too. I didn't think she had it in her."

"Oh, there's plenty in her."

"How do you know?" quickly marking his son's tone.

"How do I know?" with a laugh. "Why, because she pulled me through a big smash, of course. By Jove, you get to know your nurse's moods then, I can tell you. She managed me properly, but I had to obey orders. She stood no fooling. If she had, I shouldn't be here this minute."

At the very first chance Laurence Murgatroyd sought out his wife. It was not easy, for every one in that large household was well on the

alert, and anything like familiar intercourse between the nurse and the young master would have been noticed at once. In fact, so difficult was it, now that Marion was in her most strictly professional guise, that Laurence was reduced to the necessity of sending a formal message asking her to come to him in the library for ten minutes.

He had to wait nearly an hour, but at last she came. "You sent for me," she said, quietly. "I am sorry to keep you waiting, but I could not come. Your father is not nearly so well to-day; I could not leave him."

"Yes. I sent for you. I wanted to say something. Marion, you are getting on better."

"Perhaps."

"No, it is not perhaps; it is a fact. You have the game in your own hands."

"I don't think so."

"But if he asks you to stay, you will?"

"I really cannot."

"Marion!" reproachfully, "don't say that. Dearest, you are not angry with me for what I said yesterday?"

"You hurt me yesterday, Laurence."

"Did I? I never meant to do so. Darling, I know it's awfully hard lines on you to be here like this in the house where you ought to be the mistress; but, for my sake, do try to bear it to the end. I feel that you will conquer the old man in time. He is old and full of whims and caprices, more than ever now that he is ill. But he's a dear old chap down at the bottom, he is really; and if you will only try to win him over, I know all will be right. Your woman's wit will get round him in time. You walked into him, he tells me, and he admires you for it."

"I am highly honored."

"He—— Marion, you are crying."

"Nothing of the kind," she said, sharply.

"Then you ought to be. Marion, my darling, if I was a brute to you yesterday,—and I believe I was,—try to forgive me. Don't let you and me fall out, even if everything else goes against us. Come, don't look at me like that. You'll find out by and by that the best of us are mistaken fools at times. But—but—won't you give me a kiss, Marion?"

She was not very easy to win over. It was the first time that so much as a shadow had ever come between them, and she had been terribly wounded by his sharp words of the previous day. She had felt, too, very bitterly the humiliation of her defeat, her failure.

Still, she was young and very much in love with her husband, and he was persuasive and full of penitence. So the little breach was bridged over, and Marion promised that if the old man showed any signs of wishing her to remain she would stay and do her best to win him over to eventual forgiveness.

"But, mind you, it is only a forlorn hope, Laurie," she said, resting her head against his as they sat together. "He doesn't really like me, and if you get another nurse he will gladly see the last of me."

"I don't think so; and we cannot get another nurse," Laurence replied. "And, by the bye, dearest, I have arranged with Mrs. Mackay, the under-keeper's mother, to come up to the house and do what she can to relieve you. She won't be much good as a nurse, but she might sit up to-night while you get something like a night's rest."

"Is she a nice, comfortable, middle-aged person?" Marion asked, with a smile.

"I should say most uncomfortable, for she is just like a tub," Laurence replied. "But she is a capable, sensible woman, who will be of some help. We should have had her in before but that she was away from home, nursing a daughter."

"Then my chance is over," said Marion.

"On the contrary, the difference will be so marked that it is probably only just begun."

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## CHAPTER VII.

### A COMFORTABLE, MIDDLE-AGED PERSON.

"DAD," said Laurence Murgatroyd to his father when he first went into the old man's room after his interview with Marion, "I have seen Mrs. Mackay. She is coming up presently to lend a hand with you."

"Eh?"

"Yes. I hope she'll be comfortable and middle-aged enough to satisfy you. I'm sure she's fat enough to please any one."

"Mrs. Mackay—— H'm! And pray why can't the lass do? She's stayed on and stayed on——"

"Nurse Marion is only human, you know, dad. She really does want a night's rest now and again. I regularly jumped at the chance of getting Mrs. Mackay as soon as she came home. I thought you'd be immensely pleased."

"I'll be immensely pleased when I've got quit of all these women-folk for good and all," growled John Murgatroyd. "However, the lass can go to bed, and thankful shall I be to have Mrs. Mackay in her stead."

The under-keeper's mother arrived presently, a huge tub of a woman, not so tall in stature as huge in girth, with a bust like a feather bed. She had a round, red, shining face, radiant as the sun at noontide, and a pleasant enough voice to those who understood a real Scottish accent.

"I wonder how long he will put up with that," murmured Marion to Laurence, as the "nice, comfortable, middle-aged woman" crossed the room with a footfall which made the floor actually shake under her tread. "Not very long, I should say."

But the night passed by, and, though John Murgatroyd suffered tortures, nobody but himself was the wiser. In truth, he would rather have died than have let "the lass" know how much he missed her and how much he had to endure by reason of the change. He was very ill, and the sciatica, which remained persistently in one limb, gave him neither peace nor rest by day or night. Marion had given Mrs. Mackay

the bottle of lotion and had told her how to use it; but her unskilled efforts were so terrible to the old man that he suffered the pain in silence rather than endure the double torture of her heavy hand upon the quivering limb.

He was a strange old man. He had taken a violent and wholly unreasonable dislike to Marion, a dislike which almost amounted to a detestation, and he had never hesitated to give full and open expression to it, in utter disregard of her feelings and his welfare alike. Towards Mrs. Mackay, during the few days which followed her introduction into the establishment, his feelings were altogether different. He not only disliked her, he feared her. Not in a mental sense, for John Murgatroyd was afraid of nothing and nobody, but with an actual physical, bodily fear. He grew to dread the quiver which her heavy footfall sent through his tortured limb; the touch of her hand upon the bedclothes; the very accents of her sing-song voice grated upon his ears, and her peaceful snores, when she sat down near the bed and, as she put it, "dropped off for a minute or two," were only less horrible to him than the shortness of breath which the smallest exertion accentuated in her. Yet all this he bore in silence rather than own up frankly that a "nice, comfortable, middle-aged person" could be inferior to a "bit of a lass." The result was that, instead of improving by reason of the change, John Murgatroyd's health steadily grew worse, until he became so nervous and exhausted that the doctor was almost at his wits' end. Still, he never breathed a single word of the true state of affairs, and Mrs. Mackay continued in her office, quite unconscious but that she was the greatest help and comfort to the master.

Marion, however, was not so blind as the others about the sick man. She was quick to recognize by straws which way the stream flowed. She realized on the second morning that he had not allowed Mrs. Mackay to rub his leg.

"How many times did you rub Mr. Murgatroyd's leg?" she asked, carelessly, holding the bottle up to the light.

"I spiered o' the master ilka time if he wadna hae it dune," Mrs. Mackay made haste to reply. "But he wadna."

"It doesn't hurt me—much," growled a voice from the bed.

"Well, that's a blessing, anyway," was Marion's cheerful remark. "All the same, Mr. Murgatroyd, I think we won't quite give up attending to it. You had better let me give it a good rubbing now."

He said not a word against the suggestion, and some instinct told the girl that it had not been lack of pain which had prevented him from accepting Mrs. Mackay's attentions.

She remained up herself that night, letting her helper stay with the sick man for a few hours in the evening. And, as she suspected, and as is almost always the case, the pain in the leg was much worse than it had been during the day.

"I shall not leave your father at night again," she said to Laurence: "that good, fat, 'nice, comfortable, middle-aged person' is throwing him back by her elephantine attentions. She must come for a few hours in the evening; he is always at his best then. I can get quite enough rest to put me through the night comfortably."

"As you judge best, of course," said Laurence.

"I am sure that will be best. You know, Laurie, I am no nearer to your goal yet,—no nearer than I was. He likes me no better than he did."

"Oh, I think you are wrong there, dearest."

"No," shaking her head. "Perhaps he does not openly hate me as he did, but that is all. Still, I do think he realizes that I know something about nursing."

"Of course he does. He has never mentioned 'nice, comfortable, middle-aged persons' since Mrs. Mackay arrived on the scene. By the way, I shall have to go back to the regiment the day after to-morrow."

"Will you really?"

"Yes; further leave is impossible just now. I may get a few days later on if the poor old dad should be worse. I shall not be surprised if you completely subjugate him as soon as I am gone; only, no larks, mind,—no setting your cap at your patient."

"I shall do my best. But, oh, Laurie, joking apart, it will be dreadful when you are gone. He will miss you horribly, and he will be so difficult to do for."

"I doubt it. He will be more dependent on you, and therefore more amenable. At all events, I cannot get any extension of leave,—not as things are with him at present. You may be sure that I shall do my best to get back again as soon as possible."

"Have you told your father?"

"Not yet. But I will presently," was Laurie's reply.

It was, on the whole, as well that Laurence Murgatroyd happened to communicate the news of his impending departure to the old man when the two were alone.

"What!" he exclaimed, "you're going away?—you're going to leave me to—to that lass and the old woman? Then you'll soon have to get leave to come to my burying."

Laurence Murgatroyd laughed. "Surely not so bad as that, sir?" he said, jokingly. "You are getting used to Nurse Marion, and—and Mrs. Mackay is a nice, comfortable, middle-aged person. What could you have better?"

"H'm—Mrs. Mackay! but there, no doubt she does her best; but a poor best it is. How's Mrs. Robinson,—poor old soul?"

"Pretty bad, from what I can make out. She does not seem to shake off the illness as she ought to do."

"Who's nursing her?" the old man asked, in an unwilling tone.

He was like many other sick people, he hated being laid by the heels, it was in fact a wholly distasteful situation to him, but all the same he bitterly resented that any member of his *entourage* should have the audacity to fall sick when he had special need of his or her services. But, blunt and outspoken as he was, he would never put the idea into plain words. If he had spoken his mind at that moment, he would probably have remarked that it was in the aggravating nature of womankind that Mrs. Robinson should fall sick at the moment when there was the utmost need that she should remain well.

"Who is nursing her?" he asked.

"Nursing her?" repeated Laurence, lifting his eyebrows. "I don't think, sir, anybody gets nursed except yourself. Cook does a little, and the maids do a little, and Nurse Marion looks in whenever she can get away from your side. If I could get a couple more nurses down I would, but it's not to be done; nurses are at a premium just now, and poor old Mrs. Robinson has to suffer in consequence."

"H'm. Why doesn't Mrs. Mackay help?"

"Mrs. Mackay? Ah, you would think that such a nice, comfortable, middle-aged person would fill that crevice very nicely, wouldn't you? But Mrs. Robinson, unfortunately, has the same objection to her as yourself."

"Objection? I never said I had any objection."

"No, not in plain words, sir, but you must think me a very blind bat if you suppose I can't see that that nice motherly Mrs. Mackay sets your teeth on edge every time she comes near you."

"She's not much of a nurse," growled the old man, unwillingly.

"No, I shouldn't think she was. Good, estimable woman, good wife, excellent mother, and all that, I have no doubt, but as a nurse—as a nurse I pin my faith to Nurse Marion; she knows her business. Indeed, Nannie told me yesterday that if it hadn't been for Nurse Marion she'd have been in her grave days ago."

"Oh, you have seen her?"

"Oh, yes, I've seen her every day, of course."

For a moment or two there was silence between them, then the old man spoke again. "I wish, Laurie," he said, "that you hadn't to go away."

"So do I. But you know, governor, you would make a gentleman of me; you would have me go into the service, and the service don't believe in sick relations."

"But nobody can say that I'm not sick,—sick unto death."

"Yes, I know; but nothing would make our colonel believe it."

"You could send a doctor's certificate."

"I'm afraid, my dear old dad, that commanding officers, in these decadent days, are proof against even doctors' certificates. Upon my soul, I don't believe that even the death certificate itself would fetch him."

"I don't know what you mean by decadent," said the old gentleman, with a growl. "I wish you wouldn't use your long dictionary words to me; downright bad form, I call it. Look here, you'd better send a wire to your colonel and say I am very ill and I cannot spare you."

"My dear dad," said Laurence Murgatroyd, easily, yet in a tone which carried conviction with it, "I'm not so anxious to go back to the regiment but that I've tried every dodge for remaining here. I've written twice to the colonel, and twice he's granted me a small extension of leave. I've quoted the doctor's opinion to him and asked for longer leave, and all the reply I got was that my leave was at an end on such a day. I'm afraid I'm like all the rest of them: I've invented relatives too often for him to believe even in my own father."

"I call it shameful of you," said the old gentleman, but there was

a twinkle in his eye which belied his words. "Have you done anything else?"

"Yes," said his son, in a tone that was a little more short. "I sent him a wire this morning, and the reply I got was from the adjutant, saying, 'Further leave impossible.' So you see, dad, I must go back. I hate leaving you now. Don't," seeing that his father was about to speak,—“don't make believe anything about my having been dull or anything of that kind; I have been nothing of the sort. I have been anxious about you,—deadly anxious; for you know,” with a little break in his voice, “you know what I think about you; and if it wasn't that I am leaving you in skilled hands, by Jove, I'd chuck the service straight away: yes, that I would! But it seems a pity, when I'm so near my troop, and you're so proud of my unearned glory. But if you are a shade worse, dad, don't hesitate to wire for me. Unless the circumstances were very exceptional, even a commanding officer, worn out with his subalterns' sick relatives, would scarcely be so hard-hearted as to refuse a wire which was distinctly genuine; besides, if necessary, you could get the doctor to do it.”

"I'll bear it in mind, I'll bear it in mind, Laurie," said the old man.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### LAURENCE MURGATROYD'S LAST WORD.

JOHN MURGATROYD said nothing more to his son when he had acquiesced in his leaving home again on the following day; indeed, the conversation had ended in the old man's dropping asleep, and Laurence Murgatroyd slipped out of the room into the dressing-room adjoining, where he found Marion, who had just come from her own room after her day's sleep.

"Well, have you told him?" she asked, eagerly. "I didn't come in, because I heard you talking; I heard that you were there. What did he say?"

"Oh, yes, I told him. He's not very pleased at my going; he seems to think that you are bound to set your cap at him if you are left here alone. But mark my words, Marion, the worst is over. He didn't make half such a fuss about being left as he would have done if he were still hating you as much as he did in the beginning."

She stood with her foot upon the fender, looking thoughtfully into the fire. "He doesn't hate me as he did," she said: "he only dislikes me. He has got over the worst of it, as you say; but I don't think he will end by feeling anything better for me than mere tolerance."

"I don't want him to fall in love with you," said Laurence Murgatroyd, smiling.

The old man was distinctly better that day, stronger, less quarrelsome, more reasonable, and his son began, with that easiness which is characteristic of human beings, particularly of the stronger sex, to fancy that what he wished was an accomplished fact, to flatter himself that his father had seen the folly of trying to arrange a marriage for

him, and that, even supposing he was not willing to accept Nurse Marion as his daughter-in-law, he would at least abandon further efforts to lead his son into the bonds of holy matrimony. He had, however, reckoned without his host. The character which John Murgatroyd had earned among his fellows of being one of the most steadfast men that had ever drawn the breath of heaven was not without some traces of obstinacy. There is but a very fine line drawn between the two characteristics, and in the nature of John Murgatroyd it would have puzzled a stronger head than any at that time to be found in Murgatroyd Park to distinguish clearly where steadfastness went out and obstinacy came in.

So when Laurie, secure in the feeling that all things were working together for good, went to take leave of his father, he was considerably startled when the old man put a leading question to him.

"Oh, you've come to say good-by, have you?" was his almost ungrateful remark. "So you've made up your mind not to stay with the old man any longer?"

"Now, dad, you know it's not that," said Laurence, reproachfully.

"Ah, you say not, you say not. Send yon lass out of the room: I want to speak to you privately."

His son looked towards Nurse Marion, and that young lady disappeared with so much promptitude that even the old gentleman could not find occasion for grumbling.

"Well, dad, what is it?" he asked.

"It is just this, Laurie. You never gave me an answer about that girl."

"What girl?"

"Why, Potter's daughter."

"Oh, Potter's daughter,—Miss Potter," said Laurie, comprehensively. "What about her, dad?"

"What about her?" The old man peered up at him from among his many pillows, with a look which seemed to say, "Don't you really know, or are you trying to fool me?" "What about her? Well, are you going to marry her, or aren't you?"

"I am certainly not going to marry Miss Potter," said Laurence, in a very blank voice. "Did she tell you we were engaged? I hope not."

"No, sir, she did not tell me you were engaged; she did not mention you one way or the other; but she has got fifty thousand pounds in her own right, and she is a fine upstanding wench, and I think she would suit you very well."

"Oh, do you?" said Laurence, delicately scratching his head with the tip of his third finger. "You think she'd suit me, do you, dad? Do you think she'd have me?"

"Do I think she'd have you? She'd jump at you; I know that perfectly well."

"Oh, do you! Well, I shouldn't like to be refused."

"You'll not be refused; I have reason to know that."

"Oh, have you? Evidently she's been confiding in you, dad."

"I didn't say so," growled the old man.

"Oh, well, no, perhaps you didn't actually say so—no; but, let me

see, Miss Potter,—Miss Potter—— By the bye, how should you like to marry Potter's girl yourself, dad?"

"I don't want to marry anybody. How could an old hulk like me marry any one?"

"Because I was going to suggest that you should marry her yourself."

"I don't want to marry any one," said the old man.

"Neither do I," said his son, in a bland and confidential tone. "I don't think, dad, I could marry any one, least of all Miss Potter. I know that she has fifty thousand pounds, and, as you say, she's a fine, understanding wench, but marry her——"

"Stuff and nonsense!" John Murgatroyd growled.

"Yes? Well, we had better think it over, eh? I haven't been troubling myself about marrying and all that sort of thing lately. Don't you think we might put it off until you get more like yourself again?"

"No," said John Murgatroyd, "I don't. There's no time like the present."

"Well, but I am going back to the regiment; I have no time to see Miss Potter and ingratiate myself with her. I couldn't ask her cold-bloodedly, without getting to like her a little first."

The old man tried to raise himself into an upright position, but the sudden movement caused him such a thrill of agony through his tortured limb that he fell back on his pillows with a groan.

"Laurence," he said, "I am very ill, but I'm no fool. You are trying to make me one this minute."

"No, dad," said Laurence; "the boot is on the other leg. It is you who are trying to fool me, when you gravely suggest, almost with vigor, that I shall sell myself to Miss Potter for fifty thousand pounds and the rest. I would do a good deal to oblige you, dad, short of marrying somebody I don't like; that I would not do. Let us put an end to this game of cross-purposes, of cross-questions and crooked answers. You can't seriously mean that I shall sell myself to Miss Potter? You don't seriously mean that you would like Miss Potter to be the mistress of Murgatroyd? What is fifty thousand pounds to you? You are worth millions."

"How do you know that?"

"How do I know it? I don't know it; I only guess it; but I'm certain that fifty thousand pounds to you is a mere flea-bite. Why should you be so mercenary as to set a few dollars against your son's happiness? I grant you, dad, I've been a fool in the past, I've gone the pace like all other fellows, and perhaps a little harder. There's no disgrace in it, only folly; but if I sold myself to a woman I didn't care for, a woman I wouldn't marry if she had nothing, I should be something more than a fool; I should be a knave then. Come now, dad, we've been through a dark time together, you and I; don't ask me to do this horrible thing. It's bad enough to go away and leave you ill like this, when I would much rather stay; but to feel that I'm going away leaving you lying here planning out what would be a degradation and a penance to me for all the rest of my life is horrible, dad,

—horrible. Don't do it, sir. You wouldn't if you knew what it costs me to say 'no,' to refuse you anything."

The old man looked hard at his son. "I believe," he said at last, "that you've got other views for yourself, other fish to fry. There's some little slip of a lass without a penny that has put all these superfine thoughts into your head; they never came there of their own initiative."

"Nay, dad, give me credit for a little that is honorable and upright."

"Laurence Murgatroyd," said the old man, "did ever you know me go back from my word? Did ever you know me break my bond, go against my pledge?"

"Never," said Laurence.

"Well, then, I have sworn that you shall marry a wife with money, and I will keep my word, whatever it costs me. Money you've wasted, money you shall bring into the Murgatroyd estate, or the Murgatroyd estate you shall never handle. Once for all, will you do it, or won't you?"

"Once for all," said Laurence Murgatroyd, "I will not marry any woman that I don't love. I am no fool, though I may have sometimes acted like one. I wouldn't have despised a wife because she had money, not a bit of it, but Mary Potter shall never be my wife. Once for all, I answer you on that score. And now, if I am to catch my train, I must leave you. Dad," he said, with an anxious break in his voice, "don't send me away in anger. No money, no woman, can be worth that."

"Is that your last word?" asked the old man.

"Yes, it is my last word."

"I will not give you mine," said John Murgatroyd; "I will not give you mine. I'll not part in open anger. I will give you another chance; I will write it. Yes, before another forty-eight hours are gone by I will write you my last word down, and from that word I will never go, so long as there is a God in heaven above us. Then I may take it it is not to be Mary Potter?"

"It cannot be Mary Potter," said Laurence.

"Then there is another? Well, we will settle it once for all; we won't quarrel about it; and when I'm dead and gone you shall know what my last word was on the subject, and till then we will let everything slide, we will remain as we are. But mark my words, Laurence Murgatroyd, when once I have put pen to paper there shall be no change, no turning back; yea shall be yea, and nay, nay; and some day you may be sorry that you defied me."

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## CHAPTER IX.

### MAKING WAY.

WHEN Laurence Murgatroyd at last left his father's room he had but time for a hurried word to Marion as he passed through the dressing-room.

"For heaven's sake, dearest," he whispered, "do your best to

smooth him down. He's on the old tack again, that I must marry money. If he's extra crotchety with you, be patient with him. Everything hangs upon your getting round him."

"Of course I'll do my best, Laurie," she said, in rather a frightened tone; "but you know, dear, if I venture to do much battle for you he will suspect at once."

"No, no, I don't mean that; but if he is upset and irritable and——"

"Oh, I'll let him work the steam off upon me as much as he likes. You know, Laurie, he is very much upset at your having to go back to the regiment, and it's not to be wondered at. But don't worry. Write to me as often as you can,—every day, if you can manage it,—and come back as soon as you can possibly get leave."

"Yes, dearest, I will certainly do that. I hate to leave you here alone, but I am leaving everything in your hands. Good-by, my love, good-by."

As the sound of departing wheels died away down the avenue, Marion heard the old man calling her from the adjoining room. She went in with her calmest and most professional face and with a studied cheerfulness of manner which would have disarmed all suspicions, if he had possessed them,—which he did not. In her hand she carried a small covered cup. "Now, Mr. Murgatroyd," she said, pleasantly, "it is time for your chicken broth, and I believe it is extra good to-day."

"I don't care whether it is good or not, I don't want it," he replied, ungraciously.

"Oh, but you mustn't let your strength get down now that Mr. Laurence is gone: you must try to eat everything that I bring you; and this is such good chicken broth."

"I tell you I don't want it," he said, in a louder key.

"I know you don't want it," she replied; "it is not a question of what you want, Mr. Murgatroyd, it is a question of what you have got to take."

"And who says must to me?"

"Well, I do," she said, coolly. "If you don't take your chicken broth, and your beef tea, and your medicine, and everything else that your doctor orders you, I shall get into trouble; and I am sure you are much too just to wish me to get into trouble with the doctor because you wouldn't do anything that I asked you to do."

"I don't want it," he said, crossly.

"No, I know you don't want it, and I know how horrid it is having to do things that you don't want to do; but you will not get well and shake off this illness unless you take this and things like it. Come, Mr. Murgatroyd, you could have disposed of it by this time."

He lay still for a minute or two, looking past her through the window at the winter landscape.

"Is it strengthening?"

"Oh, yes, most strengthening."

"Well, I will take it, since you say that of it. I want all my strength. I want to get strong and well as I used to be. Yes, I'll

take it. And when it is gone, I want you to sit down at the table there and write a letter for me."

He was too weak and suffering to feed himself, and she, with skilled and practised hands, administered the savory liquid to him as she would have administered milk to a little child.

"There, now," she said, when she came to the last spoonful, "it was not so bad. You said you wanted me to write a letter for you?"

"Yes."

She carried the cup away, and then seated herself at the table, which stood not far from him. "Will you dictate to me, or will you tell me what kind of a letter you want written?"

"I will dictate. 'Dear Sir,—Will you be good enough to come over to see me here immediately on receipt of this? I am exceedingly ill, and wish to set my affairs in final order without delay. Circumstances have arisen which make it imperative for me to make a fresh will, and I shall be glad for you to take my instructions as soon as possible.'"

"You will sign it?" said Nurse Marion. "Or shall I do it for you?"

"I will sign it myself," he replied.

So she carried the blotting-paper and the pen to the bedside, and he appended to her letter a very feeble and shaky-looking signature. Still, it was his own. He told her his lawyer's name and address, and bade her see that the letter was sent off without a moment's delay. She did his bidding, with the feeling of one who was signing her own death-warrant. He gave her no hint of his intentions, but lay brooding and unmistakably suffering during the rest of the day.

As soon as lunch was over, she went, as was her custom, to bed, leaving Mr. Murgatroyd in charge of the robust and rubicund Mrs. Mackay; yet when at night she resumed her post she saw that the cloud was not lifted from his face. Still, she argued, it was possible that it was merely the pang of parting, while so very ill, from his son, and, being herself also very sad at heart from the same cause, she was particularly tender and sympathetic to him.

"What made you groan like that?" she said, suddenly, as he moved uneasily in the bed.

"It was nothing,—a mere twinge," he replied.

"A twinge? In your leg? Oh, don't say that you're going to have the pain back again. When did it come on? when did you first feel it?"

"Some time this afternoon," he returned, unwillingly.

"Oh, dear, dear!" she said, as she came back with the bottle of liniment in her hand. "How many times have you had it rubbed?"

"I haven't had it rubbed at all."

"Mr. Murgatroyd!"

He shifted uneasily under her reproachful gaze. "Well," he said at last, in a defiant tone, "she's a decent body, but she doesn't understand rubbing my leg. She's heavy-handed. I've heard women-folk say that pastry-making is a gift; well, rubbing is another gift. You've got it, and she hasn't."

"Then why," said Nurse Marion, very severely, "why could you not send for me and let me come down and do it for you?"

"Oh, I didn't want to break your rest."

"Break my rest! What's my rest to me against my patient's getting better and getting rid of me?"

He shifted still more uneasily. "Oh, as to getting rid of you," he said, "I suppose we are all anxious to get rid of our nurses, because it means getting rid of our illness."

"And sometimes for other reasons than that," said she.

She felt that she was making way, and, in spite of the ominous note that she had written earlier in the day, her heart went up by leaps and bounds.

"Oh, you needn't throw it at me," he said, still more ungraciously.

"Nay," said she, "I am too happy to have made myself useful to you to cavil at anything; but another time, if you want me in the day—that is to say, when I am asleep—don't hesitate to send for me. I am young and strong, and we nurses are accustomed to falling asleep the moment we lay our heads upon our pillows. It is no trial to me to come down for a little time from my sleep; indeed, to be quite candid and to speak selfishly, it would be less trouble to do that than to have all this extra pain to fight against when I do come down. So you see I was speaking at least one for myself, if two for you."

For some minutes John Murgatroyd lay silent, then at last he burst out, as it were, with a remark which, coming from him, conveyed as much as volumes would have done from any other man. "Eh, but there's real grit in you," he said. "I miscalled you when you first came, you seemed such a bit of a lass."

"Thank you, Mr. Murgatroyd," she said, very quietly.

So, after all, Laurence had been right; she had got over the worst, although at that moment she did not seem to be much nearer to the object with which she came into the house. Mr. Murgatroyd was distinctly worse, in greater pain, in greater restlessness. He scarcely slept at all throughout that long night, and when the morning came he told her, as gruffly as ever he had spoken to her in his life, that she was not to leave him, that he had need of her, and that if she stayed up during the whole of the day he would put up with Mrs. Mackay at night.

"No," said she, "I shall not leave you with Mrs. Mackay at night: you are never so well when I come down again. Mind," she added, quickly, and with her finger lifted to give impress to her words, "mind, I have not a word to say against her: she is a good, kind, motherly, well-meaning woman, and I would go to her if I were in trouble before many others that I know of: her only fault is that she has not been properly trained in nursing. I know you thought when you first saw me that I was very young—very young indeed—to be your nurse; but, Mr. Murgatroyd, youth has nothing to do with it; one needs a natural aptitude and a great deal of training. You don't choose your head gardener because he is old and fat, you choose him for what he knows; and, as you were telling me only the other day, your gardener has won more first prizes in orchids than all the other head

gardeners in the county: that is only because he learned his trade properly under a first-class master. I learned mine under the greatest physicians and surgeons of the day. The result is the same. I will stay with you as long as you want me, and then, when you can comfortably let me go, I will get as much sleep as I can to carry us through the night."

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CHAPTER X.

## ANOTHER LAST WILL.

JOHN MURGATROYD had been settled for the day, and his doctor had come and gone, when the clock struck eleven.

"Is that a carriage coming up the avenue?" he asked, suddenly.

Nurse Marion went to the window. "Yes, there is a carriage coming up the avenue," she said, quietly; "a brougham."

"Then that is Blenkinsop. I am glad he has come so soon, for I have no time to lose. You told them to show him straight up-stairs, didn't you?"

"I did, Mr. Murgatroyd."

A few minutes later the door was opened, and Mr. Murgatroyd's solicitor was ushered into the room. He was a tall, dignified old gentleman, thin and spare of figure, and clean-shaven and astute as to countenance.

"My dear sir," he said, coming to the bedside and holding out his hand, "I am sorry to find you still so ill."

"Yes, I'm very ill, Blenkinsop," said John Murgatroyd, unpromisingly; "I'm very ill indeed. I don't think I shall get over this bout."

"Oh, nonsense, nonsense! My way, you know, takes me among a good many sick people, but you don't look to me as if you were done for, not by any means."

The lawyer was still holding the invalid's hand, and shaking it gently with a protective air, which he had in the past found extremely effective.

"Well, of course," said John Murgatroyd, "you don't know how I feel, and I feel very bad. At all events, I want to make a new will."

"Oh, a new will. Do you? Why? Are you not satisfied with the last one you made? I am sure it seemed to me very fair and equable under the circumstances. Perhaps you want to leave your son Geoffrey——"

"I don't want to leave my son Geoffrey anything different from what I did," said the old man. "Nurse, you needn't go."

"I would rather go, Mr. Murgatroyd," said she, quietly.

"Would you? Well, I would rather you didn't. You just stay where you are, young woman.—Blenkinsop, that bit of a lass yonder is the very pest of my life,—the very pest and plague of my life. It's she will and she won't all day long: I'm sick of it."

"Mr. Murgatroyd is very sick of me," said Nurse Marion, looking

at the lawyer, "so perhaps Mr. Blenkinsop will call me when you want me."

"Mr. Blenkinsop won't do anything of the kind," said John Murgatroyd. "Sit you down, sit you down, and don't you speak a word until I speak to you again.—The very pest of my life, Blenkinsop; but, more's the pity, I can't get on without her."

"Please let me go," said Marion.

"I shall do nothing of the kind. Sit still; I may want you. You've been pestering me with your attentions for days and days, and now that I want you you can't stop in the room. Sit you down."

Thus adjured, the girl had no course open to her but to sit down on her chair again and to busy herself as best she could with a fragment of needlework. It was eminently distasteful to an honorable nature like hers to sit there listening to matters in which she was supposed to take no interest, but which in truth interested her more than any others in the world. However, she knew her patient well enough to know that further resistance would be useless, and that she would only do more harm than good by opposing his will. Mr. Blenkinsop crossed one leg over the other and looked at his client in expectant silence.

"I am going to make a new will," said the old man. "The last one is no good. It is all right so far as Geoffrey is concerned. Geoffrey is a thoroughgoing bad lot, as bad a hat as ever I knew in my life. Where his badness comes from the Lord only knows; his mother was as good as gold. I may be hard, but if I am hard I have always been just; I may be pig-headed, and I may have flattered myself that my pig-headedness was firmness, but I have never been bad. Go from one end of the county to the other, and you will find the name of John Murgatroyd and the words 'square man' mean the same thing. My word is my bond, and always has been, and how a son of mine comes to be the dishonorable blackguard that my son Geoffrey is, the Lord above only knows. However, four hundred pounds a year I left Geoffrey in my last will, four hundred pounds a year paid quarterly in advance as long as he lives, and that is my last word concerning Geoffrey,—my very last word. It is not about him I want to think; I have seen my last of him; bad he is, and always was. He was a bad baby: I'll be bound to say that Geoffrey got his teeth with more screaming-fits than any child that was ever born."

"Then," said the lawyer, in his cold and deliberate voice, "it must be the greater comfort to you, my dear sir, to think that your elder son is so thoroughly what the heart of any man and father could desire."

"That's just it; he isn't."

"Eh?" in a tone of intense surprise. "Why, my dear Mr. Murgatroyd, I thought that your son Laurence was such an exceptionally good fellow. I have always understood so."

"In the sense in which you mean it my son Laurence is good enough," said the old man, "but cursed obstinate, sir, cursed obstinate."

"It seems to me," said the lawyer, taking out his snuff-box and

helping himself with calm deliberation, "that you ought to be very lenient to that fault. Has Laurence ever gone against you?"

"Yes, sir," the old man flashed out, "my son Laurence has gone dead against me, and is going dead against me. I don't say that he's not an affectionate son, I don't say that he's not a credit to me; he's both; it's dad here and dad there, wait on me hand and foot, and never seems to care a hang though I should live forever; but the one thing I want of him he won't do for me."

"Ah! And, if it's a fair question, what is that?"

"He won't marry."

"Oh, is that all? Well, he's young; you must give him time."

"I dare say; but I want to see him married and settled. I want to know who's going to be the mistress of Murgatroyd Park. Yes, I know all that you would say, Blenkinsop,—that I ought to be thinking of other things, and that it won't matter to me when I'm gone who is the mistress of Murgatroyd Park or whether Murgatroyd Park has a mistress or not. I dare say I ought. But I don't want to think about other things; I've made my bed, and I am content to lie upon it,—both my worldly and my spiritual bed. I don't believe in whitewashing your soul at the last minute; they that do it are they that have most need of the whitewash; I have none. I have lived all my life a square man, and I'll die what I have lived. I want to know who is coming after me. It does matter to me."

"But you can't force the boy to marry to please you," urged the lawyer, resting his elbows on the arms of his chair and putting the tips of his fingers together in a truly professional attitude.

"I do urge it," thundered the old man. "I tell you, sir," banging his fists down upon the bedclothes, "that I have trotted out girl after girl for my son's edification, and only got laughed at for my pains. There was—oh, well, I had better not mention names, even to you—there was one girl worth a couple of hundred thousand pounds, as nice a girl as ever stepped in shoe-leather. What do you think his objection was to her? She squinted! He wouldn't look at her. The next lass only had a matter of thirty thousand pounds to her fortune, and she was as pretty-looking a girl as ever I saw,—nice, plump little thing. I'd have married her myself for half a word."

"And what objection did Laurence find to her?" asked the lawyer.

"Oh, he said her hair was red! Then there was another with something like eighty thousand, and all the fault he could find with her was that she didn't say her *h's* properly!"

"In short, Laurence was not in love with any of them."

"Love!" said the old man, contemptuously. "Can't you love one woman as much as another?"

"No," said the lawyer, "I don't think you can."

"What do you know about it?" growled the patient. "You've never been married."

"No, I haven't," returned the lawyer, promptly, "but if one woman would have done as well as another I should have been. Come, come, Mr. Murgatroyd, you've got a fine young fellow for your heir, honest and straight and true, everything that a father's

heart could most wish for: don't spoil it by worrying about his marriage."

"I will worry about his marriage!" thundered John Murgatroyd. "I didn't ask you to come here for your advice, Blenkinsop, but to take my instructions for a new will. If you can't take those instructions I'll send for a lawyer who can."

"Tut, tut, tut! hoity-toity!" exclaimed Mr. Blenkinsop. "What! are you going to quarrel with me, your friend of forty years' standing, my dear sir?"

"Will you take my instructions?" roared the old man.

"Certainly I will take your instructions; but it is my duty as your lawyer and as your friend to point out where I think you may be somewhat warped in your judgment."

"Put down all that blithering rubbish as to my mind being sound," John Murgatroyd went on, disdaining to notice further the lawyer's words: "put it down, and draw up the will in this wise: 'To my son Geoffrey I leave for life four hundred pounds a year, to be paid quarterly in advance under the same conditions and trusts and so on as the last will I made. To my son Laurence I leave everything of which I die possessed, on one condition—that within two years of my death he is married to a lady with not less than twenty thousand pounds to her own fortune. Within two years. During the two years he is to have the income of all my property; at the end of two years from my death, if he is not married in accordance with my wish, let everything, every farthing of my real and personal estate, be divided between the County Hospital at Burghley and the Asylum for Idiots.'"

The lawyer leaned forward with his elbows upon his knees. "And, if I remember rightly, your last will provided certain legacies for your servants, laborers, and so on."

"Let that all stand as it was: I can't better that," said John Murgatroyd, "except that you can put in yon lassie's name for one hundred pounds."

"Does that mean me, Mr. Murgatroyd?" said Nurse Marion, looking up.

"Ay."

"I am very sorry,—it is most kind of you,—but I cannot take it."

"And why not?"

"Because I cannot."

"Will not, you mean."

"Will not, if you put it so."

"Why?"

"I don't think that I need state my reason."

"I wish to know it."

She rose from her chair and poured out a little water into a glass, afterwards dropping into it a certain quantity of colorless medicine. "You are exciting yourself very much by this business," she said, reproachfully, as she held the glass to his lips.

John Murgatroyd took it and drained its contents without a word.

"Why won't you take my bit of a legacy?" he asked. "What's your reason?"

"Because," she said, eyeing him boldly, yet without any offensiveness or defiance in her tone, "because sitting here I have heard every word that you have uttered. The will you are about to make is not a just will, and I should not care to accept a legacy from you."

"You will take that legacy, and you will sign that will," put in John Murgatroyd.

"That is impossible," put in the lawyer: "nobody who benefits under the will can witness your signature."

"Then," said John Murgatroyd, looking at neither lawyer nor nurse, but straight in front of him, "then you can leave out the lassie's name, and she shall sign it."

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## CHAPTER XI.

### POINT-BLANK REFUSAL.

FULL of most righteous indignation, Nurse Marion wrote to her husband a detailed account of the latest development of affairs at Murgatroyd Park.

"Of course he does not know," she said, "he does not realize the exquisite refinement of cruelty which the situation affords me. There had I to sit listening to these details of the will by which you are to be done out of your rightful inheritance,—the inheritance which you have done nothing legitimately to forfeit,—and I am to put the coping-stone upon this deed of cruelty by signing the will which will deprive you of your rights. My dear boy, if we were to read it in a book we should say that such a situation was too improbable and too preposterous to be true, and yet it is, alas! true enough,—too true. I see no prospect before us but one of hopeless ruin for you because you married me."

In reply to this letter, Laurence Murgatroyd wrote back in a very hopeful strain.

"My dear child," he said, "pray do not distress yourself about this new freak of my father's. He is rather fond of making wills,—I have known him make quite a dozen,—and, after all, even supposing that this one stands, things would not be so bad as you imagine. He gives me two years to find this heiress, and he gives me the whole of his income during that time. My father is very rich, much richer than Murgatroyd Park would lead you to suppose: if we have to give it up in the end we shall not be destitute. On the whole, your letter has put me into excellent spirits, for you might have had much worse news to send me. I am not sure, indeed, that I have not an inkling that a scheme might be arranged by which we could comply with his conditions. At all events, although I may have been very anxious, so that I was almost brutal to you, never think, if the worst comes to the worst, that I should grudge our marriage or in any way visit my reverses upon you. After all, in that case, it is you who have the right to cry out upon me, though I know your generosity too well to fear that."

It is almost impossible to describe how entirely that letter com-

forted the girl. So far as she was concerned, poverty had little or no terror for her; she had never known what it was to be rich, and her only dread of spending the rest of her life with a due consideration for ways and means was that Laurence might in time come to regard her as the destroyer of his worldly prospects rather than as the arbiter of his happiness.

The peace in her heart communicated itself to her whole atmosphere. In voice, manner, looks, she was changed from the indignant girl who had boldly spoken up against what she believed to be an injustice.

"You are mighty cheerful this morning," said John Murgatroyd to her on the third day after the visit of Mr. Blenkinsop.

"Yes, I feel cheerful," was the reply.

"And what have you had to make you feel cheerful? I have been more disagreeable than usual."

"Yes, you've been very trying," said she, promptly.

"I have had enough to try me."

"Most of us have enough to try us," said she, quietly.

"I dare say we have. We don't feel other people's annoyances. You don't feel mine, or you wouldn't be so cheerful this morning."

"I don't consider that you have any annoyances, beyond your illness."

"Oh, don't you? Well, I do. I had a letter from Laurence this morning: he can't get leave."

"Is that so?"

"He could get leave if he liked."

"I doubt it," said she.

"You nursed him?"

"Yes."

"And he was very ill?"

"Yes, he was very ill. It was one of the nearest shaves I ever pulled through."

For a minute or two the old man lay silent. "Did you see anything to lead you to suspect that my son was—er—was—er—attached to any one?"

"I nursed your son, Mr. Murgatroyd," said Nurse Marion, coolly, "but if you wish to know whether I read his private letters during that time I can only tell you that I did not."

"But—well—did any ladies come to see him?" He was not the least abashed by her implied rebuke.

"Yes, lots of ladies came to see him."

"Oh, they did, did they? Who?"

"His colonel's wife, for one, and several of the other married ladies."

"I didn't mean married ladies; I meant girls,—such as he would be likely to marry—to be in love with."

"I didn't see any."

"You do not think there is any affair on with any of the others?"

"If you mean to ask whether I thought your son was in love with any of the married ladies who came to see him when he was ill, I did

not, Mr. Murgatroyd. Sometimes they came with their husbands, sometimes without, but I was always there."

"You never left him?"

"No."

"I see. Were you the only nurse?"

"Oh, no: it was much too serious a case for one nurse to manage single-handed."

"Ah! Then you don't think my son is attached to anybody."

"As to that," said Nurse Marion, very quietly, "I should be sorry to say one way or another. If he is, he would be the person who could best tell you."

"Yes, but I am not going to ask him."

"If he is," Nurse Marion went on, "and it is some one without money, the will that you are making will either ruin their happiness or plunge them for the rest of their lives into comparative poverty. It was because I felt this that I objected to sign it."

"But you will sign it?"

"I would prefer not to do so. It can make no difference to you whether the will is signed by me or by another."

"It makes all the difference in the world," said John Murgatroyd. "And you will sign that will. The doctor will be the other witness. With doctor and nurse as witnesses, nobody would dare to call in question the state of my mind."

"I see," said she, thoughtfully. "So Dr. Jellicoe and I are to set the seal of our professional knowledge upon this act of injustice. I don't think, Mr. Murgatroyd, that that is using either of us in a fair way. I came here, by your son's wish, to do my best to pull you through a very serious illness; I am pulling you through it; you will not die this time. Don't you think you are making me do him a very ill turn when you insist upon my signing this document?"

"No," he said, "I don't think that it can matter to you one way or another. My son has two courses open to him."

"Hobson's choice," she put in.

"Perhaps so, but there is a choice, and he must follow which line he pleases."

It was early the following morning that Mr. Blenkinsop arrived at Murgatroyd Park, bringing with him the completed will,—completed, that is to say, so far as it was entirely ready for attestation.

"Read it over to me," said John Murgatroyd, authoritatively.

"It is precisely in accordance with your instructions," said Mr. Blenkinsop.

"I have no doubt of that, but read it to me. I know your time is precious, doctor; you needn't shuffle in your chair. I want you to hear that will read before I sign it; I don't want to have any dispute, after I am gone, about the state of my mind."

"My dear sir," said the doctor, "your mind is as clear at this moment as it has ever been in your life; if anything, it is too clear. I am quite willing to sign the will without hearing it read, and nobody, I take it, will venture, in the face of my signature, to question your sanity."

John Murgatroyd, however, insisted upon his waiting, and the impatient doctor, with whom time was money, was compelled to sit with what show of patience he could while Mr. Blenkinsop slowly and impressively read out the formal and ambiguously worded clauses which would help to make Laurence Murgatroyd practically a beggar. When he came to the end of the reading his voice died away into silence. It was John Murgatroyd who broke it.

"Well?" he said, impatiently. He looked at nobody in particular, and nobody answered him. "Well?" he said, again.

"To whom are you speaking?" said the doctor.

"That is my will," said Mr. Murgatroyd.

"Well, my dear sir, then the sooner you put your name to it and let me go away to see my other patients, the better."

"And you have no doubt of my sanity?" said John Murgatroyd.

"No, I have no doubt of your sanity," said the doctor, brusquely. "I had rather not tell you my opinion,—what I do think."

"I should like to know it."

"My business is to treat you medically," said the doctor, roughly. "I have nothing to do with your property, or how you dispose of it."

"I should like your opinion."

"I don't know the circumstances of the case," said the doctor, who could be quite as pig-headed as John Murgatroyd when the fit took him. "I take it that your son objects to marry from mercenary reasons."

"My son, sir, objects to marry anybody that is pleasing me, and I am not such a fool as to be put off by excuses about squints, and red hair, and *h's*, and such-like things. I know well enough there is somebody else, and I mean my son to marry a certain amount of money."

"Oh, well, then there is nothing more to be said," said the doctor, deliberately.

"There is something more to be said. This will may be called into question when I am dead and gone: I should like you, as my medical adviser, who may have to testify to my sanity one day, to understand my reasons for making such a will."

"Oh, your reasons are simple enough. You've got a lot of money, and you want your son to add a little more to it. It's all a matter of taste. He evidently doesn't want to; and small blame to him! But all this, my dear sir, is no business of mine, and all my patients who are waiting for me at this moment are my business: so if you will be good enough to put your signature to the will and let me put mine—since you've got the fad that you want me to sign—I shall be much obliged to you."

"But you——"

"Look here," said the doctor, as John Murgatroyd broke off sharp and looked at him inquiringly. "I know what you want: you want me to say that I approve of this will. Well, I don't. I think when you've made it and signed it you will be wretched; you won't know an easy minute till you've burned it. A parent has no right to coerce a child, girl or boy, in the most important matter of his whole life: a man's marriage is for himself. You want me to say that I approve

of that will, that I think it is a just will and you've a perfect right to make it. I think nothing of the kind. I will sign it, because if I don't sign it you will get somebody else who will,—your butler, or your footman, or your gardener, or one of your people,—but say I think it right—I don't, and you know it as well as I do. You'll not rest when you've made it, and if you die leaving it behind you you won't rest in your grave afterwards. Now, is that plain?"

"Yes, damn it," said the old man, "that is plain.—Give me the pen, Blenkinsop. Let me sign, and let me get this prating platitudinizer out of my sight."

The lawyer brought a thick blotting-pad from the writing-table and pen and ink to the bedside of the old man, and Nurse Marion stood by in intense excitement, with strained eyes and lips drawn feverishly over her teeth, while the old man appended his signature to the fatal paper. This done, the doctor, who was heartily sick of the whole business, signed below the testator; then he looked at Mr. Blenkinsop and handed the pen to him.

"You nurse will sign," said John Murgatroyd.

"I cannot sign," said she.

"Nonsense! Sign at once!" exclaimed the old man.

"No, no, I cannot sign, I refuse to sign that will. There are plenty of people in the house. Oh, I will say you are sane enough, but I will not sign, Mr. Murgatroyd; I gave you my reasons yesterday. It is an unjust will. I refuse to put my hand to a will which I believe to be unjust. It cannot be part of my duty to sign a thing which I believe to be wicked. Your doctor is different. He signed it because—because he didn't mind. I do mind. I will not sign."

"Sign it, I tell you," thundered the old man.

"No; I will not sign. There are the butler, the footman, the housekeeper, all people who have known you for years and years and years, people much better able to judge whether you are in your right mind than I am: there can be no necessity for me to do this. Let me ring the bell for William."

"William will not do," said Mr. Blenkinsop. "He benefits under the will, and he was not present when Mr. Murgatroyd signed. There is no question of your sanity, my dear sir; you are as sane as you are obstinate. I have already told you so, your doctor has told you so; nobody can go against us in such a matter."

"I want the lass to sign," said the old man.

"I won't sign," said Marion, drawing herself up and eying the old man indignantly.

"Why won't you sign?" asked the doctor.

"Because Mr. Murgatroyd brought me here to nurse his father. I had nursed him before; I had given him every satisfaction; he thought that if anybody could help to pull his father through this illness that person was I; he was good enough to have faith in me. This will will destroy all his prospects in life, or may destroy them all, and it savors too much of biting the hand that feeds you to sign this document against him. You must not ask me to do it: I distinctly and decidedly refuse."

"In that case," said Mr. Blenkinsop, "much as I object to witnessing wills that I have made, I see no help for it but to sign in this instance. Now, doctor, you are free."

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CHAPTER XII.

## THE NURSE DRIVES OUT.

WHEN the lawyer and the doctor had departed from Murgatroyd Park, leaving John Murgatroyd not a little exhausted by the events of the morning, Nurse Marion put her patient in charge of Mrs. Mackay, with definite instructions for his welfare, and prepared to take air and rest until the evening.

"Stop here; I want you," said the old man.

"Yes?" Her voice was gentle, and nobody would have believed the hard fight that she had been through earlier in the day.

"Where are you going?"

"I was going to drive into Burghley: there are one or two things I want. I am too tired to walk."

"There is no need for you to walk; there are horses eating their heads off in the stables, and men-servants idling around till they are bound to get into mischief. Who wants you to walk? Do you know what you are?"

"I think so," she said, smiling a little.

"You're a stuck-up, obstinate minx, and I'll be even with you yet for standing against me in my own house like you did this morning. To think that John Murgatroyd, who never stood on one side for man or beast, should have to give in at the bidding of a young lass like you! It's preposterous!"

"But you didn't give in," said she.

"I signed the will, if that's what you mean; but you didn't sign it after me."

"No, but Mr. Blenkinsop signed it, and his signature was respectable enough for anybody."

"And why didn't you sign?"

"Because your will was unjust, Mr. Murgatroyd. With your leave, I will go out now. I said my say this morning; I have nothing to add to it."

In a moment the nervous old fingers had closed round her wrist. "You'll come back again?" he said, entreatingly. "You're not going away?"

"Oh, no!" she replied, laughing outright at the suggestion. "Because you are unjust to your son is no reason that I should be untrue to my trust. Oh, I shall come back, Mr. Murgatroyd, come back to plague the very life out of you with beef tea and chicken broth and medicines and all the rest of it. Don't flatter yourself that you've got rid of me yet, or that you are going to die this journey. I mean to keep you alive, and to have you well and strong, so that you may live to see what a mistake you made this morning.—Now, Mrs. Mackay,

you will remember that you go by the chart, as I leave it here, and don't you let Mr. Murgatroyd put you off about his chicken broth, nor yet his beef tea. He is to take them to the last drain. He'll get out of it if he can; that is his way. I've written it all down, and do you see that he doesn't thwart you as he always tries to thwart me."

The motherly Scotchwoman promised a faithful observance of the instructions which Nurse Marion had laid upon her, and half an hour afterwards the latter was driving down the avenue behind the handsome pair of horses, for which nowadays there was little use. Between excitement and overwork, her head was aching furiously, and it was with a sense of thankfulness that she felt the sharp winter wind upon her face. She wanted, too, to be quiet, to be able to think over without interruption the events of the past few days. Well, she had done her best, and, as Laurence had said not so many weeks ago, it had been a very poor best. In a way the old man was getting fond of her, he depended on her, he trusted her, but it was only as a nurse,—nothing more. She had come to Murgatroyd Park to carry out a specific object; she had failed hideously. She even went so far as to tell herself that winter afternoon that Laurence had been perfectly right in all that he had said in that their first and only quarrel. She had failed hideously. Well, the die was cast now: they would have a pittance,—what would seem almost like riches to her, what would be a mere pittance to him. For herself, she knew that she could be happy in one barrack room with the love of her heart, the man of her choice; but with men it was different. Laurence was neither better nor worse than others of his kind. He loved her, it was true, yet when that love meant going without all that had made his life, or nearly all that had made his life, when it meant the curtailing of his hunting, his shooting, his polo, and all the other pursuits which were the small change of men in his position, she was not sure then how things would go. There might come a day when he would look at her and say, "But for you, I might have had all these things; but for you, Murgatroyd Park would be mine, and all my father's thousands would be mine,—but for you." Well, she told herself, with a sigh, it was no use thinking over these things, no use bridging over trouble that was not yet actually upon her, no use meeting the clouds half-way.

She had snatched ten minutes in which to write to Laurence; she held the letter in her hand at that moment, and so she sat back in the luxurious carriage and gave herself up to the actual comfort of it. She was so alive to the necessity of nursing her strength that when she got into Burghley she stopped at the principal pastry-cook's and treated herself to afternoon tea, having given the coachman a shilling and told him to get himself a glass of beer. She enjoyed the dainty little tea as a child might have done, posted her letter to Laurence, and, having made one or two small purchases and seen all that there was to be seen in the shop-windows, she went to the hotel where the carriage usually put up and told the coachman that she was ready to start for home. By that time it was almost dark, yet she enjoyed the drive home almost as much as she had done the drive into Burghley.

"Yes, I will have my dinner at once," she replied to the question

which the butler put to her, "and then I will get a few hours' sleep before Mrs. Mackay is ready to go. I will just run up and see Mr. Murgatroyd. I shall be down again by the time cook has served my dinner."

She found the invalid's room very quiet. A shaded lamp burned beside the bed, another stood on the table near the fire by which Mrs. Mackay sat nodding over her needle-work.

"What! are you only just back?" said the old man.

"Yes, indeed; I have been gadding all over Burghley," said Nurse Marion, brightly. "I treated myself to tea at the confectioner's, and I looked in the shop-windows, and altogether I feel quite brisk and fresh. By the time that I have had my dinner and an hour or two's sleep I shall be as fresh as a daisy. Did you take your chicken broth?"

"Oh, I've taken everything!" said he, impatiently. "To-morrow I am going to have no chicken broth; I am going to have some chicken; you see if I don't. Here, I want you to do something for me. Take my keys," feeling aimlessly under the pillow,—“yes, they're under there somewhere: now, that's the key. Put it into the safe in the dressing-room,—you know the door I mean,—turn it three times to the right, and push, and then bring me that paper I signed this morning: I want to look at it again."

"You want to burn it," said Nurse Marion, quietly.

"No, I don't; I only want to look at it. Old Blenkinsop wanted to take it away to be under lock and key in his own place, but, as I told him, he has no better locks and keys in his office than I have got in my dressing-room. Three turns to the right, and push."

She lighted a candle and went into the dressing-room, carrying out his simple instructions with such obedience that the next moment the door of the safe stood open before her. It was a large safe, with several compartments. Nurse Marion did not stop to scrutinize any of these, for immediately before her was a packet endorsed "Last Will and Testament of John Murgatroyd," and the date was that very day. Hastily relocking the safe, she carried the will back to the testator, then, replacing the keys under his pillow, blew out the candle and departed in search of her dinner.

So the days went on, and John Murgatroyd suffered less, but did not make very rapid progress towards recovery, notwithstanding the close care and attention which Nurse Marion lavished on him. It was a very lonely life. Laurence could not get another day's leave, and Mr. Murgatroyd saw no visitors at all. So Nurse Marion's only distraction was to drive into Burghley and have tea at the pastry-cook's. At first her patient chaffed her not a little about her sweet tooth, but if he was obstinate he was not mean, and he told her that in future she was to take his purse and pay for her tea out of it.

"It's a dull life here for a bit of a lass like you," he said, in his brusque way. "For my part, I can't tell why you women should always be wanting slops of tea and such-like; however, if it pleases you to take your meal there instead of here, there's no reason why you should pay for it yourself, and if you want lollipops there's no

reason that I know of why you shouldn't have 'em ; but I'd prefer to pay for them myself : so take my purse and help yourself to what's necessary."

At first she felt inclined to demur, but, as she was as desirous as ever of making a good impression and not letting his liking for her slip back, she quietly accepted the situation as it stood.

Now, it happened one day, when she had left him comfortably on his bedroom sofa with plenty of books and papers and Mrs. Mackay in attendance, that she ventured to stay out a little longer than usual. Scarcely did she stay purposely ; rather was she by Christmas novel-ties and such-like things beguiled into letting the time slip by. When she returned home, in answer to her usual question if all was well, the butler, William, told her that he had not long come down from his master's room, and that Mrs. Mackay was in hall having her tea.

"But why so late?" said Nurse Marion. "And why has she gone down for it?"

"Oh, it was just a freak of the master's," William answered. "He told her that she would be enjoying her tea better down-stairs, and that he was quite well enough to be left now ; he would ring if he wanted anything. I've been up twice," the man added, "so that he's all right. He was asleep both times."

It was therefore with no feeling of apprehension that Nurse Marion mounted the stairs with her purchases in her arms. She gained the head of the staircase and entered Mr. Murgatroyd's room. He was sound asleep upon the sofa, and the light was turned down very low. She was about to creep softly out again, when a slight sound in the adjoining room made her turn her steps thither. To her astonishment, she saw a man, with a candle in his hand, standing at the door of the open safe. She went forward.

"Laurence!" she cried, in a tone of the utmost astonishment.

But the next instant the light went out, she felt herself thrust on one side, and heard the closing of the door into the corridor.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

#### TRAGEDY.

It was but the work of a moment for Nurse Marion to strike a match and light a candle.

The door of the safe stood wide open : some of the papers on the first shelf had been slightly disarranged, and one or two had fallen to the floor. The keys lay upon the shelf, and the inner compartments had been opened. Quick as thought, and with a view of shielding Laurence, she pushed the papers into place and locked the safe, then, with the keys in her shaking hand, she went into the adjoining room, to see whether her patient had been in any way disturbed. No, he was lying there quietly. She put the candle down upon a table and approached the sofa, and, as she did so, the fire, which had burned

dully red, suddenly fell in, sending a brilliant flame half-way up the chimney.

She knew as well as possible what Laurence had come after: he had got a few days' leave to be a surprise both to his father and to herself, had walked in quietly, had found her away and his father alone, and the temptation to do away with that will had been too much for him. Her only instinct was to keep quiet until she could obtain possession of it again and replace it.

As the brilliant flame shot up through the room, she turned again to the invalid's couch. To her dying day she never knew what it was that made her look at her patient more closely. Be the cause what it might, having once looked at him she realized that something very dreadful had happened. It was no living man that lay stretched upon that couch.

The next moment she had flown to the bell, and was almost tearing it down in her efforts to summon assistance. It seemed hours ere William and one or two of the servants came running up, followed a minute or two later by panting and breathless Mrs. Mackay. In reality the butler had reached his master's bedroom in less time than it has taken to write these words.

"Oh, William!" she gasped, "something dreadful has happened! Why, why did Mrs. Mackay leave him?"

"Lor', nurse, what is it?" cried William, open-mouthed with terror.

"Dead, William, dead!" she exclaimed, breathlessly.

"Never, nurse!"

"Oh, it is too true! it is too true! Why did I go out? why did I leave him? Oh, these women! they are never to be trusted."

"It was the master's orders," gasped Mrs. Mackay.

"The master's orders!" Nurse Marion cried, in an anguish of apprehension. "Do you think I ever took his orders? No! I should have gone out of the house long since if I had done that."

"Would it have made any difference if she had stayed, nurse?" said William, sensibly, as he stood looking with awed eyes down upon his master's inanimate form.

"Oh, yes, yes, it would have made all the difference."

"Are you sure he is dead?—Here, John, you go off for the doctor. Tell Jorkins to give you the fastest horse in the stable, and don't you come back without him, or another one if you can't find him.—Hadh't we better do something?" he added anxiously to Nurse Marion.

"No," said she, and her words carried conviction with them. "You can do what you like till doomsday, you will never awaken Mr. Murgatroyd. He is dead." Perhaps it was something in the man's face which brought a merciful professional instinct to her aid. "Mr. Murgatroyd is dead," she repeated, "but we must not leave anything undone. Get me a looking-glass." As she spoke she was unfastening the collar of his warm padded dressing-gown, that she might lay her hand over his heart and make sure that its beating was stilled forever. "You," speaking to one of the maids, "chafe that hand, and you the

other. Mrs. Mackay, get his socks off. You," turning to a third scared maid-servant, "run down with that hot-water bag and get it filled with boiling water at once. It is no use, but we cannot stay here like a pack of dummies until the doctor comes, perhaps an hour hence. Yes, William, hold it over his mouth,—so." She was busy pouring some drops of sal-volatile into a medicine-glass, and after adding a very small quantity of water she came back to the side of the couch. "Let me see," she said, taking the hand-mirror from the shaking hand of the butler. "Oh, it is no use! Help me to get this between his lips; it may do it." And all the time she knew that he was dead.

The glass was undimmed; the medicine trickled slowly over the side of the helpless mouth; the heart was still, the hands were rapidly losing their flexibility. John Murgatroyd was dead; had died, no one knew when, and scarcely how. At last Nurse Marion ceased her efforts and staggered back to the nearest chair.

"William," she said, "it is no use carrying on this farce any longer. Mr. Murgatroyd is dead. Oh, why did I go to Burghley to-day? Why did I leave him?"

"Nurse," said the butler, speaking more in the tone of an equal than he had ever yet addressed her, "I don't see that you've anything to reproach yourself with where master's concerned. I'm sure poor master," with a glance at the figure on the couch, "would be the first to say so. You came to him in the worst of his illness, and you stuck to him single-handed through thick and thin, and master he said to me only this morning, he said, 'William,' he said, 'yon little lass'—yes, nurse, that was how he spoke of you—'yon little lass is one in a thousand, and I want you,' said he, 'to go into Burghley for me to-morrow and buy her something pretty for Christmas.' No, nurse, you've nothing to reproach yourself with where Mr. Murgatroyd is concerned."

"I oughtn't to have left him," she exclaimed, holding her trembling chin in her hand and rocking herself miserably to and fro. "I oughtn't to have left him."

"Nay, now, nurse, it would have happened just the same if you'd been here. Master's time was come, nurse: there's no need for you to reproach yourself for having left him to take your proper rest and exercise."

"No," broke in the sobbing voice of the under-keeper's mother, "it was me that should not have left him, puir gentleman, but he seemed so weel, and he bade me so cheerful and kindly to get down to my tea; and William he cam' up to spier at him twa times——" And then the poor woman threw her apron over her head and broke into violent sobbing.

"It's no use your crying like that," said Nurse Marion; "it's all of our faults,—nobody in particular, but every one of us. We were all here with nothing else to do, and we let him die among us. Oh, here's the doctor."

The doctor, however, had but little to add to the general verdict. They all knew that Mr. Murgatroyd was dead, and he confirmed the knowledge.

"I am not at all surprised," he said, when he had heard the several

stories and had examined the dead man. "Mr. Murgatroyd was in that state of health when this might have happened at any moment. That he happened to be alone was unfortunate. I doubt if he knew anything about it; I should say that he had dozed off and had slipped away in his sleep. For months past Mr. Murgatroyd had suffered from a very pronounced heart-complaint, and latterly, as you know, nurse, that has been the chief trouble with which we have had to battle. Anything might have carried him off,—the sudden closing of a door, the unexpected arrival of a friend, the most trivial cause. Any shock would certainly have been fatal to him."

"Any shock!" The words seemed to beat into Nurse Marion's very brain, and she kept her shaking hand tight over her trembling mouth in a vain attempt to hide the horrible agitation which possessed her. Nothing, however, escaped the keen eyes of the doctor.

"Come, come, nurse," he said, putting his hand on her shoulder and patting her kindly, "you mustn't take it like this. You are upset with what has happened while you were out, but you are only human, and sleep and fresh air are as necessary to you as nursing and medicine were to him. You have nothing to reproach yourself with whatever."

"But I do reproach myself, doctor," she said, hastily rising and going towards the fireplace, where she stood hiding her face again. "If I had been at home,—if I had stayed here,—this would not have happened."

"If you had been at home," said the doctor, "you would have been in bed; and if you had been in the room it is most probable that it would have happened just the same. There is certainly the bare possibility that sal-volatile, administered on the instant, might have warded off the seizure, but it is most unlikely that you would have noticed when the faintness came over him. It is most unfortunate, and it is very distressing and uncomfortable for all of you, but, at the same time, Mr. Murgatroyd was a doomed man; his life was hanging in the balance, and its duration was a question of weeks at the very utmost. Come, now, nurse, you had better go to bed at once, and I will send you a composing draught."

"I shall not go to bed," said Marion, "until all is done that is my duty. It is the last that I can do for him now."

No, her own heart said to her, it was not the last service that she could render him. It was several hours before she was able to sit down to think over the awful knowledge that had come to her, to go over that last scene, when Laurence had crept into his father's house, into his father's room, had killed him by the shock of his entrance, had rifled his pockets of the keys,—of which the key of the safe was one,—and had deliberately stolen—yes, that was the word, stolen—the will which would ruin them. He had put out the light, he had thrust her on one side, he had gone; nobody had seen him, nobody had suspected that he had been there. Well, that was merciful; nobody must suspect, nobody must ever know. The will would be sought for: what must she say? what should she say? what could she say? After all, it was no business of hers; it was nothing to her; she was not

interested in it. But the horror of the situation grew and grew upon her, until she had, in sheer self-defence, to dig her nails into the palms of her hands, to press her teeth hard upon her under-lip to keep herself from screaming aloud. To think that Laurence—Laurie, the man she had loved, her husband—had done this dastardly thing! Worse than all, to think that he had done it for love of her, for her sake; to think that she had dragged him into the necessity for doing it! She beat her hands together and hated herself. She had never known what it was to hate herself before. But she must keep the secret; she must lock her door at night, so that nobody could come in and hear her talking in her sleep. She must watch every word, every look, and every gesture that escaped her, lest in her anxiety she should unconsciously give Laurence—her husband—away, and fix his crime upon him. For it was a crime,—a hideous, black, cowardly, dastardly crime! Oh, she would save him; yes, she would save him, because it was partly her fault, her unconscious fault, but her fault all the same.

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#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### FIRST INQUIRIES.

It was just ten o'clock when Marion appeared in the breakfast-room the next morning. The sight of her own white face in the glass above the fireplace frightened her, and William, who was looking extremely subdued, set a chair for her with much sympathy of manner.

"There is no answer from Mr. Laurence yet," he remarked, as he took the silver cover off the bacon-dish.

"No answer? What do you mean?"

"Well, nurse, we telegraphed this morning, as soon as the office at Burghley was open, to let Mr. Laurence know. He has not replied yet."

"Why didn't you send last night?"

"It was no use. By the time we had got our scared senses together it was too late to send a telegram. There is no all-night office within twelve miles. James did suggest sending over to Grimthorpe, but I didn't see the good. Ill news travels fast enough, and Mr. Laurence will be rare and cut up at the master's going like that."

"Oh, yes," said Marion; "there could not be the least need for driving twelve miles to send such news an hour or two earlier. He could not have got here during the night. There is nothing to be gained by haste at such times. It was not as if he were still alive."

She had not finished her breakfast, however, when William returned, bringing a telegram upon a salver.

"It will be from Mr. Laurence," he remarked, and waited to hear the contents.

"Yes, it is from Mr. Laurence," said Marion, checking a strong desire to clinch the flimsy bit of paper into her hand. "You can read it."

"NURSE MARION, Murgatroyd Park, near Burghley," William

read, in slow and unctuous tones. "Utterly shocked; starting immediately. LAURENCE MURGATROYD."

"Ay, I knew he'd feel it, Mr. Laurence. 'Utterly shocked.' Yes, I should think he was. 'Starting immediately.' Well, nurse, I'd better go and look out trains and see when he's likely to get here. I should think he'd come by the six-forty. He can't get here without going to London."

"I can't say, I'm sure. He'll probably telegraph," said Marion, trying to hide her face behind her coffee-cup.

"Not unlikely. Well, I'll go and tell Jorkins that the brougham will be wanted some time during the day."

So there was a long, dreadful day to be got through. She could make no arrangements for the funeral; she had nothing to do, nowhere to go, nobody to whom she could talk, except the old housekeeper, who was slowly and shakily recovering from her illness, and who had no other topic of conversation than her dead master. There was no mourning to be ordered except for the women-servants, and, being only the nurse, Marion could not take that duty upon herself. There was nothing to do, except to see the doctor and the lawyer, who came over together during the course of the morning. She went up-stairs with them, while Mr. Blenkinsop took his last look at his old friend and client.

"You had better give me his keys, nurse," he said, as he turned away from the body, in a voice which he tried hard to make emotionless and ordinary.

"Dr. Jellicoe took them last night," replied Marion.

"Where were they?"

"I took them out of our poor friend's pocket," said Dr. Jellicoe.

"I thought it better, as there was no member of the family present, and as I happened to know that the will was in the safe,—to say nothing of other things. I took them away with me."

"Quite right; quite right. Well, if you will give me the advantage of your presence for five minutes I will look over the will and take it away. It is a most unjust will,—the most unjust thing that I ever knew my poor old friend do, and more was the pity he was so keenly set upon it. Let me see, the key of the safe,—I think that is it."

Marion stood by, not knowing whether to go or stay. She was afraid that if she left the room, as she certainly would have done under ordinary circumstances, the action might be construed afterwards into a cowardly shrinking from facing the worst: so she stayed there, leaning against a bureau and striving to seem calm and composed. She knew, poor girl, perfectly well which was the key of the safe, but she did not help the lawyer by making any parade of her knowledge.

At last Mr. Blenkinsop found it, and the great iron door swung slowly back upon its hinges. He turned over the few papers which came immediately to hand, but there was no sign of the will.

"Dear me!" he said, "I put it down just there: I never opened the inner cupboards. I don't see it."

"Mr. Murgatroyd had the will out after you put it away," said Marion.

"Oh, had he? When?"

"The same night that he signed it."

"Ah, you don't say so! Do you think he destroyed it?"

"I don't think so," said Marion, "for I put it back again."

"Did he have it again?"

"Yes, he had it out again."

"Did you put it back again?"

"I did. And each time I laid it just where I found it,—where you yourself put it."

"Do you think that Mrs. Mackay got papers out of that safe for him?"

"I cannot say. I dare say she is down-stairs: shall I send for her?"

"If you would be so kind. The will is certainly missing. Do you think that Mr. Murgatroyd was inclined to destroy it?"

"I don't know. I asked him the first day whether he wanted to burn it, and he said, 'No,' and afterwards I replaced it, as I told you."

She crossed the room and rang the bell as she spoke. When the housemaid appeared in reply to the summons, she asked if Mrs. Mackay was below, and if so if she would tell her to come up-stairs at once.

The under-keeper's rotund mother was down-stairs, not, indeed, having been at home since Mr. Murgatroyd's death. She came into the dressing-room with a scared look on her broad red face.

"Mrs.—Mrs.—Mackay, yes, Mrs. Mackay, during the times that you were in attendance on Mr. Murgatroyd," began the lawyer, "did he ever send you to the safe for him?"

"That he did, sir," was the ready reply. "And I said to the master, said I, that I didna like intermeddling wi' papers and valuables; and he said to me that there were no valuables in the safe forbye such as were to be foond in the inner pairts, o' which he hadna gien me the key."

"And you gave him——?"

"I gied him ilka time a blue paper that he tellt me I should find on the shelf just there."

"And did you put it back afterwards?"

"I think I did, sir."

"Did you go to the safe yesterday afternoon?"

"No, sir, I did not."

"Very good, Mrs. Mackay: that will do."

"Now, doctor," said the lawyer, "there is one question I want to put to you. Was it physically possible for John Murgatroyd, when left alone, to have got up and fetched the will for himself?"

"Perfectly possible. He could walk a few steps, nurse?"

"He walked from the bed to the sofa yesterday, sir. Of course he was shaky and I gave him my arm, but he could have walked by himself?"

"Then, depend upon it," said the lawyer, "that his reason for sending Mrs. Mackay down to her tea was that he might go to the safe, get

out that will, and put it into the fire without anybody knowing anything about it."

Marion began to breathe more freely. If only he would go on thinking that, the hideous truth need never come out.

"Then how will the property go?" asked the doctor.

"Oh, that is a very simple matter. When he gave me instructions to make that absurd will by which Laurence was tied up to marry an heiress, I carried his last will away in my pocket, and it is at my office now."

"And that will hold good?"

"Certainly."

"And how is the property left in that?"

"Oh, practically everything is left to Laurence, with various legacies, and an annuity to the younger son."

Mr. Blenkinsop, having satisfied himself that the will was not in any of the inner compartments, locked up the safe again and put the keys in his pocket. Then the two went down-stairs and were hospitably pressed by William to take a glass of wine. The rest of their conversation was lost to Marion, because she had no excuse for following them. Still, she saw them go away together, the one getting into his comfortable little brougham, the other tearing away ahead in his smart dog-cart.

She was alone again, and breathed more freely. So the greatest danger seemed almost to be overpast: they had no suspicion, these two, of the way in which John Murgatroyd had met his death; they never guessed that she had gone in at the untoward moment, that she had surprised Laurence in his burglarious work, that she had replaced the scattered papers, locked the safe, and had sufficient presence of mind, even in the midst of her bewilderment and surprise at discovering that her patient was dead, to slip the bunch of keys into the pocket of his dressing-gown. What a mercy that she was fairly strong-nerved,—that she did not lose her head in moments of emergency! Nay, it was more than a mercy; it meant salvation to Laurence Murgatroyd.

It seemed as if that long day would never drag its hideous length away. In her life at Hollow Cottage she had been accustomed to spending long, long days entirely alone, save for the company of her old servant; yet even at such times, when Laurence had been on duty and unable to get away from barracks at all, she had never known a few hours which dragged along so slowly as the hours did on the day after Mr. Murgatroyd's death. It was not dulness which made them drag so heavily along; oh, no: it was something far worse; it partook of dread, of dread when her eyes should meet his, dread of the inevitable explanation between them, dread of that afterwards, when the disclosure of their marriage must be made, when they must live out their lives as man and wife with ever this hideous sordid secret between them.

She sat down and looked at her lunch, and, although William delicately pressed her with each of the several little dishes of which it consisted, she ate nothing. Then, wrapping a shawl around her, she went out into the conservatories, and, with the help of the head gardener,

gathered an armful of the purest and daintiest blossoms, with which to deck the dead. That done, she went back to the little room again and to the fireside, and began to think once more, to think it all over with weary, weary reiteration,—to think that her Laurence was something—something she had not known, something strange, something guilty, something criminal; and he was coming home, on his way now, to simulate distress, filial grief, to take up the responsibilities of the new life which lay before him!

"I brought the tea a little earlier, nurse," said William, appearing through the gloom. "You had such a poor lunch, I thought you would be glad of tea in good time. Now, do try to eat; do, nurse. There is a bit of extra special toast made on purpose for you, and I've had a telegram from Mr. Laurence to say that he'll be here by the train that gets to Burghley at ten minutes past five. The carriage is going off for him in half an hour: wouldn't you like to go, just for the drive, to get a breath of air, and get out of the house a little? Mr. Laurence is sure to be eager for the news. Wouldn't you like to go?"

"Not for the world," she replied. "It's very kind of you to think of it, William, but I'm not in the mood to-night for going anywhere. I'm tired out. I'd rather sit by the fire and wait."

Wait for what? Wait for the awful meeting which must come sooner or later between them. She shrank from the idea of a three miles' drive in a close carriage with her husband, as if she were a criminal and he her accuser. Women are like that,—some of them. So she sat on, sat by the fire alone.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### AN INTERVAL.

At last the sound of wheels was heard coming rapidly along the avenue. Nurse Marion, sitting intently listening in the little breakfast-room, which she had not left all day, rose to her feet and stood clutching hard at the mantel-shelf. She meant to go out into the hall to receive the dead man's son, but at the last moment her nerve failed her, and she stood there, holding on for support to the object that was nearest to her. The wheels stopped; the horses' feet came to a stand-still; the listening ears caught the sound of the opening door and Laurence Murgatroyd's voice.

"Where is she?" she heard him say. And, although she could not catch William's reply, she knew that he was telling his master where she was.

The next moment the door opened and Laurence came in, with his face blanched, his whole air dejected, and yet with a light in his eyes which there was no mistaking. He came forward with both his hands outstretched.

"I got the telegram," he said. "I came as soon as I could. What am I to say to you—how am I to thank you for all that you have done

for him, my poor old dad, whom I left almost in anger? Marion, I want you to take me to see him."

She shrank back. "Oh, no, no, not I. William, Mrs. Mackay, any one, but not I. I cannot go."

"But surely, of all, you are the one who has most right to go there with me," he said, gently.

She looked up at him in amazement.

He had closed the door behind him; he was still holding her hands; he had, apparently, not thought of kissing her. "Who has so much right as you," he said, "you, who did everything for him? Come, I should like to go at once."

"Then go; but I cannot go with you. It is impossible. I will not, dare not."

"Why, my dearest, what do you mean?"

"Oh, Laurence, you know."

"You mean, dearest, that in a measure we have deceived him; but I don't think that we need trouble about it now. He is gone where these feelings have no place. He did not actually know what we had done, but I think he understands now."

"It is not that," she said.

"Then what?"

"Oh, Laurence, you know. You know without my telling you. I cannot go into that room with you. Go alone; or some one will take you."

He shrugged his shoulders and dropped her hand. "As you will," he said. "And when I come down again, you will tell me all about it."

But when Laurence Murgatroyd came down from his visit to his dead father's room, Nurse Marion had disappeared.

"Where is Nurse Marion?" he said to William.

"She have gone up-stairs, up to her room, Mr. Laurence," was William's reply. "She will dine with you to-night, Mr. Laurence?"

"Certainly."

"She'll eat nothing," said William, confidentially. "I never see any one so terrible cut up in my life. It was terrible, sir,—terrible! You see, Mr. Laurence," he continued, as he ~~laid~~ <sup>rested</sup> one hand upon the back of a chair, "nurse had gone into Burghley for a bit of an airing, and master was better, very much better, and glad that she should have the chance of a bit of a change. Why, it was only yesterday morning—yesterday, Mr. Laurence—that he ~~says~~ <sup>said</sup> to me, he says, 'Yon little lass,' he says, 'is one in a thousand, and I want you to go into Burghley for me to-morrow and buy her something pretty for Christmas.' And you see, Mr. Laurence, the poor master going like that, all in a minute like, when there was nobody by, seemed to upset her terrible. Now, them old women nurses what we used to have, nothing ever upsets them. Their appetites is always good, and their drinketites better. But with these lady nurses things are different. They're pitiful, and they're feeling. They get fond of their patients, and their patients get fond of them. And, oh, dear, Mr. Laurence, she did take on terrible last night,—terrible!"

"Of course it must have been a dreadful shock to her," said Laurence Murgatroyd, heaving a sigh, if the truth be told, that he could not go boldly up to Nurse Marion's room and try to comfort her. "And of course, William, it's a great satisfaction to me to know that my father liked and appreciated her; because, you see, I was responsible for bringing her into the house."

"The master certainly did like her, Mr. Laurence," said William, in his most confidential tones; "he couldn't abear her out of his sight. Mrs. Mackay, good, decent body as she is, always seemed to upset him, like. He put up with her, and that was about all you can say. And Nurse Marion she went to bed later and later every day that passed over her head, and if it hadn't been that I thought of suggesting that she should use the carriage of an afternoon I don't believe she'd ever have got out at all. She's a decent body, is Mrs. Mackay, I have no word to say against her, Mr. Laurence, but she's heavy-handed, and she's heavy-footed, and she breathes hard, and if she sets a bottle down she sets it down with a bang. She doesn't mean to—oh, a well-meaning woman as ever stepped—but that indelicate, no daintiness about her ways, everything done with a puff and a snort. And when a poor gentleman is so ill as the master was, it's no wonder he couldn't abear to have her about him."

It was not until the housemaid who waited upon her brought hot water and told her that it was time to prepare for dinner that Marion decided that she would risk going down to share that meal with Laurence. Then caution came to her aid, and bade her, whatever it cost her, to do as she would do in ordinary every-day circumstances.

They naturally did not talk very much as long as William was in the room. Laurence Murgatroyd was subdued and quiet; the girl in her white nurse's cap opposite to him was as pale as a sheet and evidently worn out. It was not, indeed, until the door had closed behind the sympathetic William that Laurence addressed anything more than the most trivial remark to his wife.

"How unkind of you, dearest," he said, "not to stay with me!"

"Not at all," she replied: "I think it would have been very remarkable if I had stayed. I suppose you want to keep up appearances to the world until I can get away? I can't go until the funeral is over."

"And then—?" Then you will go to Hollow Cottage, and I will follow you the next day. After that, as soon as we like we can begin our new life together. I shall have nothing to do here, for, from what you tell me of my poor old dad's last will, everything will be held in abeyance for a couple of years."

She looked at him in open-eyed amazement. Was it possible that he meant to brazen out the position to her,—she who had found him at the open door of his father's safe absolutely turning over papers to which he had no right of access? Was he going to pretend to her that he had had no part in the disappearance of that will? Oh, it was clever, perhaps it was worldly-wise, but it was audacity itself! Well, if that was his *role* she would fall into it for the present. If he said nothing, she would say nothing. If he kept silence, she too would

not speak. That was a game that two could play at, and, for the present, she would show that she was as proficient as he.

"We can discuss that later," she said, very quietly, as she rose from the table. "For the present, Laurence, you will excuse me, perhaps, if I go to bed. I am very tired: I did not sleep last night. It is not necessary to decide anything at present, and I am a good deal overdone."

He had risen too, and he took her hand and drew her nearer to him. "Do you know," he said, looking at her very tenderly, "that you have not yet given me one single word of welcome? You have not kissed me."

Her eyes fell before his; her cheeks burned with a sense of her own guilty secret.

"I have not felt like welcome and merrymaking," she said, in an ominously quiet voice. "Yesterday was enough to take the heart out of a stronger woman than I am. I felt, when I went to bed last night, as if I should never be able to close my eyes again. I dare say you can't understand me, but it is true all the same."

"You are thoroughly overdone," said Murgatroyd.

"No, not overdone," she replied; "it is scarcely the right word for your purpose. I am heart-sick, Laurence; I am unhappy and wretched. I shall never be bright and gay and happy again. Cannot you understand, when I went into that room and found all my illusions shattered at one blow, that I realized what a mistake I had made in marrying, when I understood that it was too late to undo the past,—the past that I would give worlds to alter? Can't you understand that all the life and heart went out of me?"

"No," he said, blankly, "I cannot. I think, my darling, that you are taking altogether too exaggerated a view of the case. Of course I know that you had set your heart upon getting round my poor father, but I think you may reasonably console yourself with the feeling—with, indeed, the certainty—that if you had been given a little longer time you would most assuredly have accomplished your object."

She looked at him for a moment in greater amazement than ever. "Then why," she said, blankly, speaking as if the words were wrung from her, "why, Laurence, why did you not give me that time? Why were you in such a hurry?"

If her tones were the tones of one wrung with agony, his face was absolutely blank as he looked at her. "Upon my soul," he said, "I don't understand you. Give you more time! Why, what do you mean? It is no use going back now and wishing that we had waited to be married. You were not unwilling. I—I—I don't understand you."

She looked at him reproachfully. "Oh, Laurence," she said, in a pained voice, scarcely above a whisper, "if you are going to take that tone, it is no use our talking any longer! I will leave you." And before he could stop her she had slipped out of the room.

He sat down by the table again with a very blank face.

"Well," he ejaculated, aloud, "it is quite true, one can never tell how a woman will take things."

## CHAPTER XVI.

## A JOURNEY ALONE.

THE next few days were singularly uncomfortable ones to Laurence Murgatroyd. To those who are left behind there is always a great sense of unrest, especially when the one who is gone is the head of the house. There was much to be seen to which could be done only by Laurence Murgatroyd himself. For instance, the day after his arrival he was visited both by the doctor and by Mr. Blenkinsop.

"I don't know whether you are aware," the lawyer said, "that your father made a new will?"

"Yes, I was aware of it," answered Laurence, though he did not think it necessary to add how he had been made acquainted with the circumstance.

"It was not a just will, and I did my best to persuade him against it. However, he insisted upon it, and I made it, and it was signed. Its principal provision was that, unless you were married within two years of his death to a lady with not less than twenty thousand pounds to her fortune, the whole of his property, with the exception of certain legacies, including a provision for your brother Geoffrey, was to be divided between the County Hospital and the Asylum for Imbeciles at Burghley."

"Well?" said Laurence, in a questioning tone.

"Well, Mr. Murgatroyd, that will has disappeared."

"Disappeared?"

"Yes. I put it away in the safe in your father's dressing-room, and gave him the keys. I naturally went there to look for it when I came over after his death, but it was nowhere to be found. Nurse Marion tells me that he twice had it out to look at it, when she both gave it to him and put it back into its place. The old woman who relieved Nurse Marion also fetched it for him on several occasions; but she also believes that each time she put it back again. She was not with him at the time of his death. Nurse Marion was out,—had gone for a drive for the sake of the air,—and your father, being on his bedroom sofa, and decidedly better, sent Mrs.—let me see, what was her name? Oh, Mackay—yes, he sent Mrs. Mackay to get her tea in the servants' hall. William went up to look at him twice, and both times found him asleep, but when Nurse Marion came in she discovered that he was dead."

"What has this to do with the will?" asked Laurence.

"Well, it is my belief," said Mr. Blenkinsop, "that your father on that occasion got the will out himself, and that he destroyed it. No one else saw him or had access to his room; nobody was interested in its disappearance, excepting yourself. You, of course, being a seven hours' journey away and easily traceable, are out of the question. At all events, the will has gone, and I believe that he destroyed it. I hope he destroyed it. It was not a just will; it was one which it gave me great pain to make, and more pain to see signed. Our dear old friend was in a measure the victim of his own integrity of character. Sometimes, you know, my dear Laurence, it is almost the curse

of a man to know that his word is his bond, for he does not always like to break it, even when he knows that it would be more just to do so. Your poor father, my dear old friend and client, had that feeling to an abnormal degree,—the feeling that his word was his bond; but I feel very, very glad to think that he was strong enough in view of his approaching end to do what was right and just both to you and to himself."

"Then how will his property go now?" asked Laurence.

"As to that, it is very simply explained. The previous will which your father made left the bulk of his property to you. There is an annuity to your brother Geoffrey, and various legacies to different servants and employees."

"Is that will in existence?" Laurence asked.

"I have it in my hands. When your father made his last will, he bade me take the old one—or I should say the previous one—away for safe keeping, a circumstance which in itself seems to bear out the truth of what I believe, that he was not very keenly set upon his last testament."

"Then the heir to the property is——?"

"Yourself," finished the lawyer. "And I must congratulate you that everything has turned out so thoroughly as it ought to have done."

When Mr. Blenkinsop had gone, Laurence Murgatroyd rang the bell.

"William, send up and ask Nurse Marion if she will come down here for a few minutes. I wish to speak to her."

"Yes, sir," replied William.

In a few minutes Marion came into the room. "You sent for me," she said, quietly.

"Shut the door," he answered. "My dear, I have great news for you," he said, drawing her to the fireplace and standing with his arm around her. "What do you think old Blenkinsop has just told me? That the dear old dad burned that will, after all, and the one which will stand is the one leaving everything practically to me. So," in a triumphant tone, "there will be no waiting, no dodging, no disagreeables of any kind. There! What do you think of that?"

"I knew that the will was gone, Laurence," she said, looking up at him, "and I knew that Mr. Blenkinsop believed that your father burned it."

"You knew? When? Last night, when I came home?"

"Yes."

"And you never told me? Why, my darling, what has come to you? It is extraordinary that you should keep such a piece of news from me, and without any reason whatever."

"I didn't intend to keep it from you," she said, wearily. "What was the good of my telling you as a piece of news something which you knew already?"

"But I didn't know."

"Did you not?"

She shut her eyes as he stood there with his arm around her. So

he was going to keep the farce up to the very end? She felt like a woman in a maze, as if her head was going. Surely she had not dreamed that she saw Laurence standing at the door of the safe in the dressing-room, a light in his hand and turning over the papers on the shelf? No, she had but just come into the house; she was wide awake; she had never been more wide awake in all her life. Then the light had gone out, she had felt herself thrust on one side, and afterwards had discovered that which was evidence enough to prove that it had been no dream, that she had indeed been very wide awake.

"Of course," he went on, mistaking the cause of her silence, "this new state of affairs will make all the difference to us. Dearest, your troubles are all over now; there will be no more Hollow Cottage, no more poverty, no more parting and dodging, and all the horrible subterfuge that has gone on since you gave yourself to me. I don't see why I shouldn't tell them at once what your real position is."

"No," she said, suddenly, speaking with the strongest emphasis, "no, Laurence, that I absolutely and entirely forbid. When the funeral is over I shall leave Murgatroyd Park and go back to Hollow Cottage. No, don't say a word; I insist upon having my own way. I want to be quiet for a little time; I want to get over the horror of what I have gone through."

"And I want my wife," he said, in a very tender tone.

"Then," she said, "you must wait for her. I would prefer that they believed that we were married after all was over. They can put it down to gratitude, if they like," she said, with a harsh, discordant laugh. "Such things have been done before, I believe."

He looked at her doubtfully. "I don't know what has come over you," he said, at last. "One would think that you were sorry that I have come into my father's property, that you liked me better when I was poor and could not do more for you than I would have done if you had been my mistress instead of my wife. I don't understand you; I confess that I don't understand you."

"Women are difficult to understand," she answered. "I did like you better when you were poor,—when you were all my own. I was happy then."

"But you will be happy now, when you have got over this."

"I shall never get over it," she said, bitterly. "I shall never be really happy again. I would give ten years of my life to go back to those happy days when you came now and then and everything was bright and fresh and honest with us. I shall never feel quite honest again."

"My dear, you take too exaggerated a view of the whole situation," he said, trying hard to make his tones patient.

"Perhaps I do. Let me alone, Laurie; don't worry me any more while I am here; be my employer's son; let me remain your father's nurse. Then, when my last duty is over, I will go home and try to pull myself together again."

So during the two days which followed they had no more interviews of this kind. She joined him at lunch and dinner, and during the rest of the day she kept as much as possible out of his way.

Then the day of the funeral came. There were much coming to and fro, the arrival of many carriages, the scent of many flowers. There was singularly little grief. Laurence Murgatroyd's face was drawn and white, and the general verdict was that he was terribly cut up by his father's death. Of real mourners, however, Laurence was the only one, for the late John Murgatroyd had not been blessed with many relations, and those whom Providence had given him he had not assiduously cultivated. There were two distant cousins of his late wife's, to each of whom he had left a trifling legacy, but there was no train of grief-stricken women, and the only manifest sorrow during that sad ceremony was from the son who was the heir to everything and the nurse who had attended him during the past few weeks.

There were the customary baked meats on their return to the house after the ceremony, a dismal feast, at which Laurence Murgatroyd presided, and at which, naturally enough, Marion was not present. The company was solemnly decorous, and the talk ran mostly on agricultural subjects. Then one by one they filed away, and Laurence Murgatroyd, the two cousins, the rector, the doctor, and a few others interested in the will, passed into the library to hear the final disposition of John Murgatroyd's worldly belongings.

Nobody had anything to say. It was a natural thing that Laurence Murgatroyd, being the elder son, and having been most with his father, should inherit the major part of the property. Those who knew anything about Geoffrey shook their heads and looked wise when they realized how completely the dead man had clipped his wings.

"Very wise," said the rector to his nearest neighbor. "Geoffrey was always a sad scamp. It would have been quite within the bounds of possibility for our poor friend to have made him the heir. He was set upon Laurence marrying money, and it was indeed the grief of the later years of his life that he could not persuade him to do so. I am sure it is a most merciful thing that everything is comfortably arranged and disposed of."

The general verdict about Laurence Murgatroyd was one of satisfaction that his father had left him the bulk of his property.

"Oh, yes," said one to the other, "there is another son,—a younger son,—a sad scamp, I believe. So sensible of John Murgatroyd to leave him enough to keep him out of the workhouse and to be paid in that way. Very, very sensible. Of course a hard-headed man like that, who has made his own fortune, generally does sensible things. Oh, yes, Laurence was always a great comfort to him. I'm sure it's to be hoped that he will leave the army and settle down at the Park: he will be a great acquisition to the county."

"Especially if he marries one of the county's daughters, eh?" said one facetious listener.

"The owner of Murgatroyd Park will marry as a matter of course," was the withering response.

However, this is straying away from the point nearest to hand. Immediately after the reading of the will William took an opportunity of whispering to his master that Nurse Marion was leaving by the five-thirty train.

"She mustn't go without my seeing her," said Laurence Murgatroyd, hastily. "Ask her to come to me in the library."

"You will go straight back to Hollow Cottage?" he said to her, when they were alone together.

"I am going to London to-night, Laurence," she said. "I cannot possibly get down to Blankshire to-night."

"No, no, dearest, certainly not; to-morrow you will go down there. To-night you had better sleep at the Burlington: you will find it very comfortable and absolutely all right."

"Is it not a little fashionable for me?"

"Not at all."

"I have only my uniform clothes with me. Don't you think I had better go to one of the railway hotels?"

"No; I think you will find the Burlington the most comfortable. Why can't you change your things in the train? You could get a carriage to yourself."

"Because I have brought nothing else."

"Oh, well, it doesn't matter. There's no harm in your nurse's uniform. You had much better go to an hotel which I know: I should much prefer it. And I shall leave this to-morrow, or next day at the very latest, and shall go straight home to Hollow Cottage."

"Very well. By the bye, you haven't paid me my wages," she said.

He laughed aloud and pulled out his pocket-book. "Will fifty pounds do you?"

"Oh, I don't want so much."

"Oh, you had much better take it. One never knows when the necessity for money arises: it won't hurt you to have it with you."

So she took the money and bade him good-by.

"Kiss me," he said, imperatively.

She turned her face on one side. "I would rather not here; it is not safe."

"Nonsense! kiss me at once," he exclaimed, with imperative affection.

She looked at him doubtfully for a moment, then with a choking sob she flung her arms round his neck and strained him to her. "Good-by, my Laurence, good-by," she said. "I am very, very unhappy; try to think kindly of me."

"One would think," said he, looking fondly down upon her, "that we were parting forever. But, dearest, think, this is the last time that you shall go away by yourself. God bless you, my wife, my sweetheart! I shall count the hours until I see you again."

He let her go with a pang. It was all wrong that she, the real mistress of the house, should go out in such guise, unattended, to face a dark journey alone. However, he consoled himself by the remembrance that it was for the last time, and set to work with a will so to arrange matters that he could leave Murgatroyd Park at the earliest possible moment to join his wife at Hollow Cottage.

It was, however, on the evening of the third day that he walked through the winter darkness along the deserted road to the little cottage

which they called home. No lights were burning, save one at the side of the house. Laurence Murgatroyd rang the bell and thumped hard upon the panels of the door, and after a minute or so Simmons came hastily out and flung open the door with a surprised "Dear me, is it you, sir!"

"Yes, it is I. I'm cold and tired, Simmons. How are you? I suppose I needn't ask if your mistress is in?"

Simmons fell back a step or so. "Lor', sir," she said, "the missis ain't here. Missis haven't been back since the night you first telegraphed for her."

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE EMPTY SHELL.

WHEN the old servant asserted in simple accents of whose truth there was no doubt that her mistress had not been at Hollow Cottage since she had left it in reply to a summons by telegraph, Laurence Murgatroyd staggered into the house with a dreadful sense upon him that some awful catastrophe had happened.

"Not here!" he exclaimed, incredulously.

"No, sir; and I've never set eyes on her since she got your telegram nearly three months ago."

"But, my good woman, I parted from your mistress only three days ago. She was coming straight home. I had business, and promised to follow her yesterday or to-day."

"Was that in London, sir?" Simmons inquired.

"No, not in London; in Westshire. She had been down to nurse my father. She was coming here by way of London."

"Dear, dear," said Simmons, then added a polite remark to the effect that she hoped the old gentleman was better.

"Yes, yes," said Laurence, impatiently, "yes, he's better—at least, I mean, he's dead. My wife remained until the funeral was over. Something must have happened to her in London. I must go back at once."

"You'll let me toss up a bit of dinner for you, sir, before you go," cried Simmons, aghast. "I have a bit of beefsteak in the house that I intended for my own dinner to-morrow, and I could make you an omelet."

"No, no," he cried, impatiently; "I cannot waste time here. I must get on."

"Are you going to London, sir?"

"Yes; I must get up without delay."

"You can't get up till there's a train, you know, sir," said she, sensibly. "The mail at nine o'clock would stop for you if you ran back to the station now and sent a message."

"Is that so?"

"Certainly it is. If you run back now and catch the station-master, I will have your dinner nearly ready by the time you are home again. Now do, sir. There never was any good yet in doing things

in a hurry. You can't catch a train before the mail, not if it was ever so; you couldn't even get a special put on. So come back and get your dinner comfortably. It's not such a dinner as missis always had for you, but it's the best I can do on the spur of the moment."

Thus adjured, Murgatroyd took his way back along the darksome road. His brain was on fire, his head in a whirl; yet his faith and trust in Marion never wavered for a moment. Some accident had happened to her in London; either she had slipped in crossing the road, or she had fallen down some steps, or been taken suddenly ill on her journey. He would find her at some hospital; of that there could be no doubt. Of course he had had a shock, almost a fright, at finding that she was not at Hollow Cottage. His first impulse had been to run out again into the dark night and attempt to find her; but the old woman, who was a shrewd old thing and kindly, had known better than he had done. Her advice had been good, and he was glad that he had been sufficiently calm and collected to follow it.

The station-master was just leaving the office for his house when Laurence Murgatroyd walked in.

"Is it true, station-master," he said, "that you can stop the mail—the London mail—by wire?"

"Oh, yes, certainly, sir. Do you wish to go to London by the mail?"

"I do, on most urgent business."

"She passes at nine-fifteen. You will make sure to be in time, for we are barely allowed a minute for getting in any passenger that we have."

"I will be here at nine o'clock sharp," said Murgatroyd.

"Will you have any luggage?" the station-master asked.

"Nothing more than this portmanteau. That can be very easily disposed of."

"Very good, sir. I will send the wire off at once."

Laurence Murgatroyd slipped something yellow and shining into the station-master's hand. Being an official of considerable importance, he demurred a moment at taking it, but Laurence turned to him and said, "Pray oblige me by accepting it. You don't know what it will be to me to get to London by that train. Thank you very much. I will be here at nine sharp."

Then he went off down the dark road again, and in due course reached Hollow Cottage.

It presented this time a very different appearance. Lights streamed from the dining-room windows, and a fire was cheerfully blazing in the grate. The cloth was laid for dinner, and Laurence could smell that it was in course of preparation. Simmons did not keep him waiting long. She apologized for the smallness of the steak.

"You see, sir," she said, "a steak for three is one thing, and a steak for a lonely body like me is another. But it's tender, and that's what everybody couldn't say of their steaks."

"Oh, no, it smells delicious; and I am frightfully hungry, Simmons," Murgatroyd replied.

"I had a few cold potatoes by me," she explained, lifting the cover

off a savory-smelling dish, "and I fried them up. Really, it is scrapped up out of odds and ends, but I hope you'll be able to get a meal off it."

"Oh, it's a dinner fit for a king!" he cried.

He was quite cheerful at the prospect of going back to London to find his wife. That was characteristic of Laurence Murgatroyd's nature; he was happy-go-lucky to the last degree. What he wished to believe he did believe, and he never accepted failure until failure was so positive that only an imbecile could have had doubt about it. He enjoyed his dinner thoroughly, voted the bit of beefsteak perfection and the fried potatoes a dream, ate the whole of the omelet, and sat down by the fire with a pipe afterwards in as well-satisfied a frame of mind as any man could desire.

It never occurred to him until he was actually in the train for London that if an accident had happened to his wife she would certainly have contrived to let him know sooner than this. If she had been knocked down by a cab, or had fallen, or had otherwise sustained injury, surely, immediately on coming back to her senses, she would have asked the hospital people to let him know without the delay of an hour.

It is a long journey from Blankshire to London, and Laurence Murgatroyd had ample time for reflection before he reached the great metropolis. By the time he got to King's Cross he was torn between two opinions: first, that she might have been very seriously injured and was lying unconscious in some hospital; secondly, that, for some undefined reason, she was purposely hiding herself from him. Truth to tell, he was more than half inclined to accept the latter of the two opinions as the right solution of the mystery; for it came back to him that during the last few days at Murgatroyd Park Marion had been more than strange in her manner towards him. It would be natural that as a nurse she should be not a little upset at the sudden death of her patient, especially remembering that he had died in her absence and that death might not have occurred at all had she not left the house; but that was no reason why she should so thoroughly take to heart the situation between them. For instance, she had spoken more than once as if something had happened which was unforgivable. Of course they had deceived the old gentleman, but then he had been unreasonable in his paternal demands, and Laurence felt that he had been in most ways so good a son that he need not now permit his conscience to trouble him on the score of having pleased himself in the matter of his marriage. Of course, if Marion had made up her mind that she would set that as a barrier between them, they had not much chance of happiness for the future. She had said to him over and over again, "Oh, you know what I mean!" She had something on her mind,—there was no doubt about that,—something hypersensitive, something distinctly exaggerated, something which would not, in the light of ordinary common sense, hold water. Was it possible that the foolish child meant to go back to her nursing, to the valiant task of earning her own living? He had heard of wives doing such things; at least he had read of it in novels. It seemed preposterous and absurd that his

wife could want to do anything of that kind, or think of doing it; but then it was equally absurd, or if not actually absurd it was equally pitiful, that Marion should so bitterly reproach herself for such a trivial matter as having married him without his father's consent.

It was close upon one o'clock when he arrived at King's Cross. He knew that it was no use attempting anything like a search that night, so he went straight into the hotel and got to bed at once. He slept like the proverbial top, and by nine o'clock in the morning was up and dressed and impatiently awaiting his breakfast.

Even then he had not made up his mind as to the best course that he could take; and while he ate his fried fish and his bacon and eggs with the help of a friendly newspaper, he went over and over the whole circumstances of the situation and tried to judge best which of the courses that were open to him he ought to take.

He might take a cab and go round all the London hospitals; but, then, should he ask for Mrs. Murgatroyd, or for Mrs. West, or for Nurse Marion? He could not possibly go and ask for one after another: that would not do. Should he go to Paddington Station and try to find out whether any one remembered the arrival of a nurse in gray uniform by the nine o'clock train on the 14th instant? It was then the 18th of the month,—the 18th of December. The stations were already beginning to show signs of Christmas traffic: he could hardly hope that any porter would have noticed her unless some very unusual circumstance had drawn his attention towards her. Of course there might be a letter or a telegram awaiting him at Murgatroyd Park; he had left home very early the previous morning, before the arrival of the post, not expecting to receive any letter from Marion. It would be easy to send a wire there and find out whether any particular communication was awaiting him.

He beckoned to a waiter and asked him to bring him a telegraph form. Without hesitation he addressed the message to William, the butler. "If any wire is awaiting me, send message on to my club without delay; also any letters."

He felt easier when that was done. At all events, he had done something. Then he finished his breakfast and concluded that he would take a cab down to Pall Mall and await the coming of William's reply. And then, when he was going up the steps of the palatial mansion which gave him a London address, he remembered that Murgatroyd Park was three and a half miles from Burghley. Three and a half miles with a hired conveyance—the kind of conveyance that the post-office people would be likely to get—did not mean receiving an answer within half an hour. The time was going by, and he was doing nothing, and all the while Marion might be in extremity. "By Jove," his thoughts ran, "I have a good mind to go to a private detective fellow. They're accustomed to ferreting things out; I am not."

He turned into the nearest room and took up the first paper that came to hand. "Mr. Searchem, Private Inquiry Agent, Pump Chambers." That sounded likely; possibly Mr. Searchem might help him.

So Murgatroyd went down the great stone steps again and got into

a passing cab. "Pump Chambers, Cistern Court; somewhere off the Strand," was his order.

"Right you are, sir," responded the Jehu of the London gondola, cheerfully.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### RENUNCIATION.

LAURENCE MURGATROYD found that Mr. Searchem was at his office and disengaged, and he was forthwith shown up into his private room. He was a flabby-looking person, with a fatherly manner, and when he had heard what Murgatroyd desired of him, he gave him every hope that the matter would be speedily and easily arranged.

"It is most extraordinary," said he, "how accidents and misconceptions do arise in London. There was a case the other day of a young lady who came to London on her honeymoon. Her husband had to go out on business, and she forgot the name of the hotel at which they were staying,—possibly she had never known it; at all events, she went out and could not find her way back again. One would think that her simplest plan would have been to telegraph home, telling them to wire back what hotel she had written from. Possibly she did not like to do this; anyway, she wandered about the streets hour after hour, not daring to ask her way, not, indeed, knowing what way to ask. She had not much money with her, and at last she fell asleep upon a bench in the Bayswater Road. There a policeman found her, and to him she confided her story. He took her to the station, and the next morning she was restored to her husband, who had been wandering about half the night in search of her, imagining that she had committed suicide or run away with somebody else, or something of the kind."

"I am quite sure that my wife has not run away with anybody else," said Murgatroyd, with a confident laugh. "I think it most probable that she has met with an accident and is lying in some London hospital."

"You were on good terms when you parted from her?"

"My dear sir," said Murgatroyd, "I have never been on anything but good terms with my wife."

"That is good hearing," said the private detective, brightly. He had his own theory on the subject, and his theory was certainly not that Mrs. Murgatroyd had met with an accident. "If your wife had met with an accident and had recovered her senses, she would have communicated with you."

"Yes, that is so. I have wired to my man-servant to find out whether there were any letters or message at home for me, bidding him send on letters or wire to me at once."

"You have had no reply?"

"I could not have a reply. My place is several miles from a telegraph office. I must give them time to get the telegram to the house and back again."

"And you would be addressed——?"

"At my club."

"If you have any letter or wire you will let me know at once?"

"Certainly."

"Well, my dear sir, I don't think that I can help you further at this moment. I will take steps to have all the police stations and hospitals searched. What was your wife wearing?"

"Oh,"—and then Laurence Murgatroyd stopped short and looked at his interlocutor,—“oh, well, the fact is, she was wearing a gray dress and cloak, and a bonnet with a gray veil,” he went on, rather lamely.

"Gray dress—gray cloak—bonnet with a gray veil," repeated Mr. Searchem, then looked at Murgatroyd with a bland expression. "That sounds like a nurse's dress."

"My wife was in nurse's dress. Look here; I'll tell you all about it. My father was a very rich man, and several years ago he made up his mind that I must marry a woman with money. I met my wife—at least my wife nursed me through a bad hunting accident, and, as I knew that it was perfectly hopeless to appeal to my father, I married her quietly. Well—er—I was staying with my father a few weeks ago, and he was taken ill. I couldn't get a nurse anywhere,—you know the dearth there has been,—and I wired to my wife to come as his nurse——"

"Oh, I see. And she did?"

"Yes, she came."

"And was the ruse successful?"

"Not at first,—no. Then my father seemed to take to her. She was a perfect angel of patience——"

"Of course," murmured Mr. Searchem.

"And he was very difficult to do for. And at last he got so that he would hardly have anybody else about him. But still we felt that it would never do to make him cognizant of our actual relations; in fact, he almost quarrelled with me because I would not propose to a certain lady, and I went back to my regiment, leaving my wife in charge of the case. And my father eventually died."

"Did he die suddenly?"

"Well, yes; at least, it was almost sudden, but he was so very ill that it was little more than a question of time, according to his doctor. He had made a point of my wife's taking a drive every afternoon, and the under-keeper's mother, a very respectable person, sat with him while she was gone. She always stayed with him while my wife got her proper sleep,—or, I should more truly say, some sleep,—and that afternoon when she came in she found that he had sent the woman down to have tea in hall. And when she came to look closer, she found that my father was dead."

"I see. And you have come in for the property."

"I have come in for the bulk of the property. I am the elder son."

"Then your wife left Murgatroyd Park before you?"

"Yes; I wished to join her at home and to bring her back as my

wife. I didn't see the necessity of servants and everybody knowing that she had been my wife all along."

"Naturally not, very naturally not," said the detective, reflectively. "Was your wife much upset?"

"Oh, frightfully so,—frightfully upset," returned Laurence, unhesitatingly. "She reproached herself most bitterly that we had in a measure deceived the old man, and declared that she should never be happy again, and a good deal more to the same effect; of course, not as between her and me."

"Naturally not," returned Mr. Searchem. "Well, Mr. Murgatroyd, I will do the best I can. If your wife is in London, I will guarantee that we shall find her. Possibly you will have a letter or a telegram during the course of the day, such as will set all your doubts and fears at rest. I hope so, I am sure; with all my heart I hope so. And be sure that you let me know if you do have any news. And if I want you, where shall I find you?"

"At the Army and Navy Club."

Mr. Searchem deliberately wrote down the address. "Well, remember that in affairs of this kind moments are worth their weight in gold, if I may use that expression, and I will trust you not to leave your club too long unvisited, so that any information may reach me as soon as possible. Good-morning, good-morning."

When Laurence Murgatroyd got back to his club, he found a telegram awaiting him from William at Murgatroyd Park. It ran as follows: "No wire received. Several letters forwarded to Army and Navy Club."

By that time it was approaching the luncheon-hour, and Laurence Murgatroyd, having put the telegram into an envelope, sent it off by special messenger to Mr. Searchem in Pump Court. Then he ordered his luncheon and set himself to await the arrival of the country post.

Evidently William must have sent the letters to be posted in Burghley at the same time as the telegram had been returned from Murgatroyd Park, for between four and five o'clock he turned listlessly into the club again and found that some letters had just arrived. There were half a dozen or so of unpromising-looking envelopes, and one in a square plain envelope, which he seized with a great throb at his heart, for the handwriting upon it was Marion's.

In order to read the letters better he had turned into the smoking-room, and he sank into the first easy-chair that he saw. Then he took out a closely written sheet and began to read. It began, "My dear Laurence," a circumstance which in itself was sufficient to make him catch his breath and sit up straight in the great lounging-chair, as if he had come face to face with a situation of great gravity and danger.

"MY DEAR LAURENCE," it said,—

"I feel that an apology is due to you for having left Murgatroyd Park without telling you what my plans were for the future, for letting you think that I intended to return to Hollow Cottage and wait there till you should join me. My dear Laurence, for you and me there can be no future, no meeting, no anything but separation and, if possible,

forgetfulness. I tried so hard to tell you all that was in my mind before I left your father's house. You would not understand me, although my meaning must have been as clear to you as it was to me. Why, why did you pretend, when I told you that I could never be happy again, that you did not know what I meant? Laurence, when you came to Murgatroyd Park, taking advantage of my absence as you did, you as surely killed your father as if you had given him poison or struck him his death-blow. When you blew the light out and thrust me on one side, did you for one moment believe that I did not recognize you? Surely that is incredible. You put out the light of my life when you put out that telltale candle. When you thrust me on one side, you thrust me out of your heart forever. I will not reproach you, for I know that you had my welfare at heart as much as your own, but you must see how impossible it is for us to think of living together with such a secret between us. So I am going away right out of your life, where you will never see or hear of me again. Pray do not look for me or in any way try to coax me back; I could never, never come. I saved you by putting the keys back again, but it is the last service that I shall ever render you. My heart is full to breaking, my head on fire, my eyes burning as though they would never, never close again. Oh, Laurence, why, why did you do this hideous thing? No money was worth it. I thought you cared for me for myself; I find that you can only care for me second to your father's money. If ever a heart was broken, you have broken mine! and not only my heart, Laurence, but my joy of life, my faith, all that went to make the sum of my earthly happiness. I am going to a life of hard work, of ceaseless toil, of utter and entire self-renunciation. I shall try, in the hard path of duty, to forget the dream that I once had of happiness that was too beautiful for this cruel and disappointing world. I have loved you heart and soul; surely I have no need to prove it to you. By the memory of that love I entreat you to let me pass out of your life now, as if I had never been. Knowing what we do know, we could never, never be happy: so that our only chance of finding happiness is to put land and sea between us, so that we may never meet again. I feel this is the only way by which one or both of us may find happiness, or, if not happiness, the peace of oblivion. Oh, Laurie, Laurie, why did you do it? why did you do it? I would have borne so much for you,—poverty, privation, obscurity,—everything except dishonor.

"Your wife,  
"MARION."

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### REFLECTION.

WHEN Laurence Murgatroyd came to the end of the letter, signed "Your wife, Marion," the whole truth lay as clearly planned out before him as a printed page. So this was the meaning of it all. This was why she had declared that she could never be happy again; this was the cause of her distress and of her wan looks. It was character-

istic of Murgatroyd that he was not in the least annoyed or angry. The first instinct of some men would have been one of pain or anger that a wife could so mistake the nobility of her husband's character. Not so Murgatroyd. To him the situation was absolutely natural, and one of his first thoughts was that her attitude was perfectly justifiable. The question was where and how soon he could find her.

He glanced at his watch. Fifteen minutes past five. Well, he would run down to Pump Chambers and try to catch old Searchem before he shut up shop for the day. No sooner said than done. He went out of the club and hailed a cab, bidding the man drive like fury to the detective's office.

Fortunately, Mr. Searchem had not yet departed from his business quarters. "You have news, Mr. Murgatroyd?" he inquired, as Laurence went in.

"Well, yes, I have news, Mr. Searchem; that is to say, I have had a letter from my wife."

"And no accident has happened to her?"

"None."

"And she has gone home?"

"No; and the worst of it is, I don't know where she has gone."

"You had better show me the letter."

"I don't think I can do that," said Laurence.

Mr. Searchem sat back in his chair with a resigned air. "Oh, well, of course, if you are only going to tell your legal adviser half a story, it is useless to expect any great result out of our consultations."

"It's not that," said Laurence, stirring uneasily in his chair, "it's not that at all, but the letter deals with family matters, which I have no right to divulge. I will read you everything that she says about herself and her plans. With regard to me she is under an entire misapprehension. Her present intention is, poor child, to try to forget me in the hard path of duty. I had an idea that the duty of a wife was with her husband, but no doubt I was absolutely wrong. In any case my duty is to find her with as little delay as possible. Where she is going, what she is going to do, I cannot imagine."

"Had she any money with her?"

"Oh, yes, she had money, but nothing in the way of capital."

"Had Mrs. Murgatroyd any relatives?"

"Well, yes, but I have never seen any of them or had any communication with any of them. You see, our marriage was a dead secret. She has a sister, I think, married to a clergyman, but upon my soul I can't give you the address, though I might find it among my wife's papers in Blankshire; she has another sister in Russia, but I can't give you her address either."

"Russia? Oh, she wouldn't go there."

"She has another sister in Australia."

"Australia! What does she do? What does the one in Russia do?"

"The one in Russia is governess to a Prince Somebody; the one in Australia is a nurse, and runs a nursing establishment of her own."

"That is where your wife has gone. Had she enough money?"

"I'm sure I don't know. What does the passage cost?"

"It would depend upon whether she went out first- or second-class or steerage, or whether she got a free passage out for her services on the journey; but that's where your wife has gone."

"By Jove, I shouldn't wonder!" ejaculated Murgatroyd. "And, by Jove, you know, when you come to think of it, that is shaking the dust of her connection off her feet in no half-hearted sort of way."

"And you seem to admire her the more for it," said the inquiry agent, in not a little amusement.

"Well, do you know, I think if I could explain the whole circumstances to you you would admire her as much as I do. She was perfectly right, knowing—or rather thinking—what she does, to go off and leave me. I admire her, by Jove, more than ever I did."

"You don't know, I suppose, what part of Australia Mrs. Murgatroyd's sister is in?"

"Oh, yes, I do: she's in Sydney."

"In Sydney. Oh, well, then, I think that narrows down our task into very small limits. I am very much obliged to you for letting me have the news so quickly. Are you remaining in London?"

"Yes: I shall stay until I get definite orders to go elsewhere."

"But—your regimental orders,—are you free of them?"

"Oh, well, as to that, I am all right for a few days at all events, and if the worst comes to the worst I can go and make a clean breast of the whole thing to my colonel. It is true that he might think that I had invented a wife for the occasion, but, on the other hand, he's a very good chap, and I don't think he'd cut up rough and refuse me extra leave. If he were to do so I should, of course, send in my papers at once and chuck the service."

"Well, then," said Mr. Searchem, "I will wire to you at your club if I have any need of you. You can do nothing more to-night. My men will go down and keep an eye on the P. & O. boats; only, as I said before, don't stay too long at a time away from your club: I might want you at any moment."

Laurence Murgatroyd was not nearly so uneasy or unhappy as he drove back along the Strand; indeed, his mind was more full of admiration of Mr. Searchem than of anxiety about Marion. He was sorry, of course, that she had been upset and made unhappy on his account, but he knew that as soon as they met he could put all that right at once and forever. Of course Searchem would set his myrmidons to work, and Marion, poor child, would be run to earth, or, more properly speaking, to water, just when she was flattering herself that her scheme for absconding was working perfectly. Then they would wire to him, and he would fly down and bring her safely back again, and try to make her forget that any trouble had ever parted them. Poor little woman, it was rough luck that such a dreadful suspicion of him should have got into her mind right on the top of their wonderful good fortune! Of course she ought to have known him better than to think that he would go interfering with the dear old man's papers or try to tamper with his will in any way. Of course had she known

that blackguard Geoffrey she would have realized in an instant that she was mistaking one brother for the other.

He lay back in the easy-running cab and gave himself up to a curious train of thought. How strange it was that he and Geoffrey should be so like and yet so unlike each other! What an unmitigated blackguard Geoffrey had always been! Laurence Murgatroyd believed confidently that if there were ninety-nine ways of doing the same thing right, and only one way of doing it wrong, his brother Geoffrey would unerringly and without hesitation choose the wrong one out of the hundred. He had always been the same from his cradle upward,—a bad hat, an ingrained blackguard, an unmitigated scoundrel. So he had broken his compact with his father, had returned from Australia, had made his way home,—probably having watched Marion safely out of the way,—had crept into the house, and had ransacked his father's private safe. Of course he had been after their mother's diamonds, and would probably have secured them but for Marion's timely entrance. They, however, were safe enough.

Then a sudden thought occurred to Laurence, such as made him sit bolt upright in the cab with a jerk that caused the horse to go skeltering on as if it had had a cut with the whip. What if his father's death was, as Marion had suggested, due to the sudden appearance of his wastrel son upon the scene? For several years the dear old man had not spoken of Geoffrey except as an incubus for whose daily bread he must provide. He had never, since he packed him off to Australia, expressed the slightest desire to see him or to communicate with him. Murgatroyd well remembered the very last time that his father had spoken of Geoffrey to him. It was when Geoffrey had written home asking for an increase of his allowance of four hundred a year, and Laurence, after reading the letter, touched perhaps by some kindred feeling, had said to his father, "Well, sir, this business he speaks of might be the making of him; you are very rich; a hundred or two more or less is nothing to you; why don't you give him a little more?" He could see as if it had been yesterday the fury with which the old man had turned upon him. "Bad he is," he thundered; "bad he was in the beginning, and bad he will be to the end. He is his mother's son, and it is for that reason alone that I have undertaken to do as much as I do for him. It's all very well for you, Laurie, to suggest giving in to his demands; you don't know the value of money; you've never had to make it: I have. I know a scoundrel, too, when I see one, and my vision isn't blinded because he happens to be my own flesh and blood, my own son. A man can't starve on four hundred a year; there's many a decent family bred and brought up on it. It is just four hundred a year too much to waste, and I feel in giving Geoffrey as much and in having willed him as much for the term of his natural life that I am taking four hundred golden pounds a year out of the mouths of honest people. Don't speak of Geoffrey to me again. There's no sickly sentimentality about me, Laurie: I've done my duty by him, and when my duty is done, that's everything."

So Geoffrey had broken bonds and come back again! And what if his coming had been his father's death-blow? what if there had

been an altercation between them,—a fight for those keys which Marion spoke of as having put back again? Put back again! did she mean into his father's pocket? What if there had been an altercation,—a struggle? It made Murgatroyd's very heart stand still to think of it. He forgot all about Marion in the excitement of the moment; that he knew would come right, but the dead once passed can never by skill of man or power of wealth be brought back again. No, not all the regret, devotion, tenderness, misery, of which the human heart is capable, can bring back the spirit which has flown, the light which has gone out of the eyes forever.

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CHAPTER XX.

## A CLUE.

WHEN Murgatroyd reached his club once more, he only stayed the cab a moment to inquire whether any letters or telegrams were awaiting him; then he drove straight on to his rooms hard by in Duke Street to dress for dinner. He was back again at the club before half-past seven, and there he lingered, although he had several tempting offers to accompany men to theatres, until bedtime.

The first thing in the morning, after he had disposed of his breakfast, he went off to Pump Chambers again, but Mr. Searchem was not there. He had been there that morning, the clerk told him, but he had gone out on important business, and had left word that he was not likely to be in before twelve o'clock. It was then a little after half-past ten: so Murgatroyd went back to the club, just to make sure that he was not wanted, and then betook himself off westward. There he fell in with a brother officer on leave, who insisted on his going in to lunch at the Albemarle.

"I really don't think I ought," said Murgatroyd, having it on his mind that he must not stay away too long from the Rag. "I am expecting a letter of considerable importance at my club, and I promised not to be away too long."

"But, my dear chap, how long is it since you were there?"

"Oh, I looked in about eleven o'clock."

"Well, you must have your food; you must eat. I declare I won't let you off. Besides, what earthly business can you have of such importance as that?"

"Well, I have," said Murgatroyd, quietly, "and it is of deadly importance. However, I will come and lunch with you, old chap; it's very kind of you to ask me. But won't you change your mind and come down and lunch with me in Pall Mall?"

"No, I can't: I have asked a chap to lunch with me at the Albemarle, so I can't; thanks all the same. By the bye, if you are so uneasy, why don't you send a messenger down and say that any message sent to the club is to be forwarded?"

"I might do that," said Murgatroyd, catching at the idea. "Really, it's an important matter, or I wouldn't make such a fuss about it."

"By the bye, old chap," said his friend, as they turned into the hotel, "you needn't bother to send a messenger; you can telephone, and if anything is wanted they can telephone to you here: you will know within a few minutes."

Their party was supplemented by yet another guest ere they began luncheon, and Murgatroyd was seemingly in the gayest and wildest of spirits. Nobody would have suspected that he was in the most deadly anxiety about his wife; and yet in his heart he knew that he had never been less gay in his life. Over and over again before his mind there came a vision called up by Marion's letter, a vision of his brother Geoffrey stealing into his old father's bedroom, struggling with him for the keys of the safe, of his father's last moments, of Marion's anguish and distress of mind, thinking that he, her husband, had done this hideous wrong to the father he loved.

"Old chap," said his host, at last, "I can't tell what has come to you; you're very unlike yourself. What's the matter?"

"The matter? Nothing," answered Laurence. "What should make you think anything was the matter, Jessamy?"

"I don't know," said Jessamy, "but you seem very unlike yourself; that's all."

"Ah, that's likely enough; we are all unlike ourselves at times. One's self is, as a rule, a dull, morose, sordid, unlucky wight, whom nobody wants to be like."

"I don't think that can apply to you, my dear chap," said Jessamy, who had heard of his guest's recent accession to enormous wealth.

"Ah, my dear fellow, you never know which of your friends given instances apply to.—Eh? what do you say, waiter?"

"Telephone message for you, sir," said the waiter, imperturbably.

"Yes?—Oh, Jessamy, excuse me a moment, will you?"

After all, the message was a very simple affair, and only informed Murgatroyd that a telegram had arrived for him at the club and was being despatched to the Albemarle by special messenger.

It is not a very far cry from Pall Mall to the Albemarle, and in the course of a quarter of an hour or so the same waiter brought the message to Murgatroyd. He asked permission by a look to open it. The message was brief, but what it lacked in length was made up by the startling quality of its contents. It said, "Sailed for Sydney yesterday morning. See me without delay."

Murgatroyd thrust the message into his pocket. "Jessamy," he said, "you must excuse me for leaving you. I have got a most urgent telegram from my man of business,—the one I have been waiting for all the morning. You will excuse me, old chap, I know. I have a lot of business on hand just now, as you can imagine."

"My dear fellow," said Jessamy, with the utmost complaisance, "I understand perfectly. Good luck, old chap, whatever it is."

So Murgatroyd went tearing away down the Strand again, and this time he found Mr. Searchem at home.

"I was sorry not to be here this morning when you came," he said, motioning to his client to be seated; "I was extremely busy on a case of great importance. Well, Mr. Murgatroyd, I told you that we should

find the lady if she was in London. We have not found her in London, but we have her safe on board the Orient."

"But I shall have to go to Australia after her!"

"Not at all. If you start on Monday for Brindisi you will be able to catch her there and bring her back with you."

"Oh, by Jove, I forgot all about that. That's a splendid idea. I shall have to get foreign leave, though. Well, that must be managed. I shall have to go down to Blankshire to-night and get the colonel to manage it for me: beastly difficult getting foreign leave, especially at this time of year, at such short notice too. However, I must get him to work it somehow. You are quite sure that it is my wife on board the Orient?"

"As sure as I am that I am sitting at this table this moment," said Mr. Searchem, emphatically. "She is booked as Nurse West, has gone in charge of a lady to Brindisi only, and I have reason to believe that the *quid pro quo* is a second-class fare to Sydney."

Murgatroyd rapped out a sharp and ugly word at the idea of his wife travelling second-class. However, it was no use thinking about that now, and he turned his attention to a more vital matter.

"You are sure I shall catch the P. & O. boat at Brindisi?"

"Well, as sure as one can be of anything. The mail is run in connection with the boat, and you may be pretty sure that the mail will take care to catch the steamer. If any extraordinary accident should happen, of course that can't be helped; but I am as sure as one can be of anything in this uncertain world."

"Then I take it that my only course is to see that I get myself to Brindisi in time," said Murgatroyd. "That means that I must leave London at once. I must get back to my regiment, see my commanding officer; and, by Jove, I should have liked to see my lawyer if I could, but that's impossible. I can't do everything, and stopping my wife from taking this journey is the most important of all. By the bye, I will write out a cheque for you now, Mr. Searchem, if you will give me a pen."

"I prefer cheques when business is satisfactorily concluded," said Mr. Searchem. "No," putting up his hand, "I know that it is not the usual thing with members of my profession; they like money when they can get it; but when I started private work I said to myself, 'Searchem, you know you're a first-class man, you know there's nobody in Scotland Yard can touch you, and you can be quite satisfied with the money you have earned.' I have never found that I have lost by that sort of thing," he went on. "Do your work well, and as a rule you will not find that clients are inclined to grudge expenditure that has brought them the exact return they sought."

"My dear sir," said Murgatroyd, opening his cheque-book out upon the table, "you shall have your way and I will have mine. I will pay half the sum I agreed upon yesterday, and I will pay the other half when I come back to London with my wife. I must confess that I had no idea that you would be able to trace her so expeditiously as you have done. I sat at my breakfast two mornings ago wondering what on earth I should do to find her. It was like looking for the proverbial needle

in the proverbial bundle of hay,—and, by Jove, without knowing whether the needle was in the bundle or not!"

He wrote out the cheque, and then shook hands with Mr. Searchem warmly. Five minutes later he was bowling up the Strand again, and by five o'clock he was in the train speeding north.

He reached Blankhampton barracks soon after ten o'clock, and found on inquiry that his colonel was dining at mess and that there were no guests. Thereupon he sent a note to his commanding officer, asking if he could see him immediately on business of the utmost importance and urgency. The colonel, recognizing the seriousness of his tone, sent word to say that he would see him in his own quarters if he would be there in five minutes. So Murgatroyd, having used the five minutes in order to wash a little of the travel dust off him, went round to the colonel's quarters and promptly made a clean breast of the entire situation to him.

"You say she's a lady?" said the colonel, who was a bachelor, and not over-sympathetic to subalterns' marriages.

"To the tips of her fingers, sir,—out-and-out lady, and as good as gold. And it's just a question, sir, of my chucking up my commission or being able to go to Brindisi to stop her and bring her back."

"I don't quite understand why she has started on this wild-goose chase," said the colonel.

"Well, sir, that's just what I can't explain to you. A circumstance happened in which my wife mistook my brother for me. She had never seen my brother, and there is a very strong likeness between us,—as far as looks go. I can't explain what that circumstance was, even to you, sir: it was pretty discreditable. My brother never did anything that was a credit to anybody in his life, and I don't suppose he ever will. At all events, my wife, believing that it was I, cleared out to the other side of the world rather than have anything more to do with me. Of course, sir, it was not very flattering, and some people might say that she ought to have known me better. At the same time, it only proves to me how straight and honest a woman she is. I take it, sir, that only a good woman would have deliberately cut herself off for the sake of a matter of honor from everything that made life pleasant and prosperous to her."

"There's reason in that," said the colonel, who prided himself on the justness of his mind and the equity of his judgment. "Well, of course, as you well know, I can't give you foreign leave; but look here, I will give you a note to the general, and do you go and see him the first thing in the morning. It isn't necessary to tell him everything. I will tell him that I am perfectly satisfied with your reasons, which are most urgent ones connected with your family."

He looked at Murgatroyd and drew a blotting-pad towards him.

"Thank you, sir, with all my heart," said Murgatroyd, gratefully. "I shall never forget your kindness, sir. I was really quite desperate when I came down. I have had a good deal to try me of late."

"I am sure you have," said the colonel, sympathetically, as he hastily scrawled the note. "Now, I think that you will find that General Harrison will put no difficulty in your way."

General Harrison, as it proved, had been very correctly gauged by Murgatroyd's commanding officer, and the following morning Murgatroyd went back to London, happy in the possession of a fortnight's foreign leave. He was not particularly pinched for time, being, indeed, a day in advance of the one on which he must have started to catch the boat at Brindisi. He decided, however, to start at once, so that he might be in the town when the ship arrived in port. He went round to his club for the last time, and the first thing that greeted him was the announcement from the hall porter that a telegram was awaiting him.

With trembling fingers he opened it. It was from William at Murgatroyd Park.

"Mr. Geoffrey," the message said, "arrived this morning, and is here now. Will you please give me instructions?"

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### DEPENDENCE FOREVER.

WHEN Murgatroyd grasped the meaning of the butler's telegram, his first impulse was to go straight off to Murgatroyd Park and arrange matters once for all. It is an old saying that second thoughts are best, and right on the heels of his first impulse came the reflection that nothing at that moment was of such vital importance to him as to catch the Orient at Brindisi. He therefore despatched an answer to William for which two words sufficed. They were, "Do nothing." Then he set about his preparations for the journey as if no such news had reached him.

"I suppose," his thoughts ran, as he found himself in the train speeding towards Dover, "that Geoffrey thinks he is going to quarter himself upon me for the rest of his life. Well, Master Geoffrey has made a mistake; I mean to have as little as possible to do with him. I dare say he thinks, now that the dear old man has gone, that the embargo about keeping in Australia is at an end. Likely enough, too, he will have his knife into Marion for disturbing him when he was after the mother's diamonds: so if I have to buy Master Geoffrey off by another quarterly allowance I should think it cheap at the price to have got rid of him. And, by Jove, I'll make it monthly: a quarterly one would give him too much rope."

The thought of Geoffrey being at Murgatroyd did not, however, trouble him much or for long. He was on his way to meet Marion, on his way to set everything right between them forever. Nothing had power to annoy him seriously, nothing short of an accident which would prevent his reaching Brindisi in time; and there was no accident.

By the time the great white vessel came to an anchorage, Murgatroyd was quietly waiting a chance of boarding her. But before he could do so he saw Marion in her gray nurse's dress coming off the vessel with a tall, middle-aged lady who was evidently in extremely

delicate health. Not expecting to see him, she was not on the lookout, and was bestowing all her attention upon her companion; indeed, Murgatroyd stepped aside to let them pass, and was just in time to hear the lady say, "Are you obliged to go on to Sydney? I wish you could remain here with me."

"I am afraid I must go on," Marion's clear voice made reply, "but with your husband and your own maid you will be all right. You are so much stronger than you were when you came on board."

"Yes, I am stronger. Ah! there is Sir George."

A tall, soldierly-looking man came hurriedly up to them and greeted the lady with much affection.

"Now, my dearest," he said, "I have got a carriage waiting for you, and everything complete for your reception. How much better you are looking! And is this the nurse who came with you?"

"Yes, this is Nurse West," said the invalid lady. "I was just bewailing, George, that she must go on to Sydney; I should so like to have kept her."

"Is it not possible, nurse?" inquired the gentleman, turning to Marion.

"I am afraid quite impossible," she replied, in decided accents.

Murgatroyd stood watching them until they had reached the carriage standing but a few paces away. He saw the lady bend forward and kiss his wife upon both cheeks, then the gentleman shook hands with her, and the next moment the carriage moved off and Marion was left standing looking after it. Murgatroyd could almost hear the sigh with which she realized that she was once more alone. She stood for a moment gazing after the retreating carriage, then sharply turned round as if to return to the ship.

Then Murgatroyd stepped forward. "Marion!" he said, in a casual voice, as if he might have just seen her by accident in Bond Street.

She gave a great start at the sight of him. "Laurence! You here!" she exclaimed.

"Yes; I came overland, you know."

"But why?"

"To fetch you home again," he said, in his most casual and everyday accents.

"I cannot go."

"Oh, yes, you can. I suppose you haven't much luggage?"

"No, Laurence, I cannot go. I wrote you my feeling, and I have not altered in any respect."

"No, my dearest, but you will. I fully appreciate all that you felt: I should have felt the same myself exactly. But I didn't happen to be the person you saw juggling with my poor old dad's safe."

"Laurence! I saw you!"

"No, my dear, you didn't. You saw Geoffrey. It's the kind of thing Geoffrey does do, has always done. I have never amused myself in that way. I may be a fool, and I believe I am, but an out-and-out cad I never have been."

"It was your brother Geoffrey?"

"It was my brother Geoffrey. He isn't really like me, but we always used to be taken for each other, somehow or other. Anyway, it was not I whom you saw that night, and I must ask you to accept my word for it. Really, it was my brother Geoffrey. If you want actual proof of what I was doing at the time, you can have it from half a dozen officers of my regiment with whom I was dining that same evening at Blankhampton. Now, will you not go on board and put your things together, so that you may come home without further delay?"

"Is it really so, Laurie?" she exclaimed, scarcely above a whisper. "It is really so; I give you my word of honor for it."

"Then why didn't you tell me during those three wretched days after your dear old father died? Why did you let me go away believing, thinking——"

"My dearest child, be reasonable," said Murgatroyd, regarding her with an air of extreme amusement. "If you had spoken out plainly, if you had told me you had seen me ransacking my father's safe and that you believed the shock that caused his death lay at my door, I should have known what to say in reply. But you said nothing. You said I knew why you could never be happy again. I didn't know. I couldn't think what in the world you were driving at. All I could believe was that you felt we had deceived the dear old man; and, although that was true, I could not see that because he had died we need feel any different from what we had felt all along."

"No, of course not."

"And I could not see that, whatever we felt, anything could unmarry us,—could undo what we had done more than two years ago, so that our obligations to each other were in any degree lessened by the realization of what we perhaps ought to have thought of in the first instance. Even then, I had no reason to suppose that you meant to make a bolt of it and show such an uncommonly clean pair of heels as you did."

"I didn't show a clean pair of heels," she said, smiling for the first time.

"Oh, didn't you? Well, I have had no end of bother after you. I went home——"

"To the Cottage?"

"Yes; and, of course, Simmons had seen or heard nothing of you. I went up to town, believing you had been knocked down by a cab, or run over by a train, or something horrible of that kind; and, feeling that it was utterly useless and hopeless to try to find you myself, I went to an inquiry office——"

"An inquiry office?"

"Yes, a detective office,—a private agency for finding out things you can't find out for yourself; and, by Jove, the old chap was very soon on your heels. I arrived here yesterday."

He turned as if to go towards the ship, but Marion stood still, looking at him with wonder-filled eyes.

"Laurie," she said, breathlessly, "I must seem an ungrateful wretch to you. I wonder you can bring yourself to speak to me."

He turned back and slipped his hand under her arm. "My dearest child," he said, "there was never a man in this world who did not love his wife better because she had a bit of spirit to show and didn't mind showing it. If you had—believing that you saw me do the most dishonorable action possible for me—quietly sat down and lived out the rest of your life with me, I should have despised you beyond what words of mine can express. I can't kiss you here, with all these hangers-on about, but you may believe me when I say that I love you just ten times as much as I did when I parted from you at Murgatroyd Park on the day of my father's funeral. I didn't think then that it was possible I could have cared for you more: to-day I know that it is. Pray, my dearest, never have any doubt on that subject. Don't let us even speak of it again. Later on I shall hope to show you how I can value your single-heartedness, your unselfishness, and your enormous pluck; for the present, our first duty is to get your baggage off the boat and make our way home again as quickly as possible."

"As to my baggage," returned Marion, "that is a very small matter. I have one cabin trunk, and that is all."

"Have you got nothing but this nurse's rig?"

"Oh, yes, I have got some plain clothes here. I bought them in town,—ready-made things, you know; they're not bad."

Murgatroyd laughed outright. "Well, dearest," he said, "I don't think you'll have any need to patronize slop-shops in future; but it would be better not to go to hotels in your uniform, because I could not do the invalid, even by the veriest stretch of imagination, and people might think there was something wrong about a man and a nurse travelling together. Can you get at them, or are they down in the hold, or where?"

"Oh, no; I have everything in the cabin in my one trunk. I will change before I come on shore."

"Then while you are doing that I will see the captain and tell him that you are not going to make the rest of the journey."

"You—you needn't tell him why," stammered Marion, apprehensively.

"Oh, no, of course not. I will tell him that circumstances have arisen which necessitate your returning home. And, my dear child, you may bet your life that he won't take any particular notice of either of us."

As a matter of fact, the only interest that the captain took either in Murgatroyd or in Nurse West was to intimate promptly that he would be unable to refund the passage-money that had been paid for the lady, and when Murgatroyd accepted his fiat as a matter of course, he asked him to have a whiskey and soda, and they parted the best of friends.

"And if you please, madam," said Murgatroyd to Marion, as they went into the hotel, "let this be your last independent bit of business for some time to come."

"I am quite willing," she returned, with charming penitence, "to let it be my last for good and all."

## CHAPTER XXII.

## THE MASTER OF MURGATROYD PARK.

"Now let us see," said Murgatroyd to Marion, when they had enjoyed a comfortable meal together. "I have six days' foreign leave left: I propose that we get on to Paris without delay and stay there until the last minute. Then you can buy yourself some proper gowns and such-like things. Poor little woman, you've had little enough in that way since you cast in your lot with mine, and now that you haven't to think of money you may as well indulge yourself in a few smart frocks, the smarter the better. There's nothing like going to the fountain-head for everything,—Paris for silk frocks, and a good London tailor for cloth ones."

It was not until they reached Paris that Murgatroyd remembered that he must spare a day to run down to Murgatroyd Park and settle matters with his brother.

"By Jove," he exclaimed, suddenly, the first morning at breakfast, "I clean forgot about Geoffrey!"

"What about Geoffrey?" asked Marion.

"Well, he's at home."

"At the Park?"

"Yes, at the Park. I had a wire from poor old William, who has been with the governor for five-and-twenty years and knows everything inside out, saying that Geoffrey was there, and asking for instructions. I suppose Geoffrey means to quarter himself upon me for the rest of my natural life."

"And you?" asked Marion, with rather a scared look.

"I simply don't intend to have Geoffrey quartered upon me, that's all. I must go down and bundle my fine gentleman out. I don't see what else I can do."

"Can he stay there?"

"Well, he can if he's a mind to, unless I turn him out. He has impudence enough for anything, and Geoffrey's impudence is patent leather, my dear."

"Then we must go back a day earlier?"

"I think we ought to do so. I shall not be able to get leave again just yet, and it is a matter which ought to be settled. I think we will arrange to go back on Wednesday, and you can have a few hours for shopping in London while I run down to the Park and settle things there."

"Then you don't want me to come down to the Park with you?"

"Oh, no, I think not; indeed, I think it will be better if you don't, my hands will be so much more free. You see, they don't know yet that we are married. I shall tell William and I shall tell Mr. Blenkinsop. You don't want to go, do you?"

"Oh, dear, no. I hope I shall never meet that brother of yours; it would be most painful to me to see him. Laurie," she went on, resting her elbows on the table and leaning her pretty chin upon her clasped hands, "tell me, what could he want in that safe?—money?"

"If he found any. I think he was on the prowl after anything

he could get hold of; he is the kind of person that nothing would come amiss to. I believe his principal object was my mother's diamonds."

"Oh! Are they kept there?"

"Yes; they were in one of those inner compartments."

"And were they all right?"

"Oh, yes, they were all right. I went over the list with Mr. Blenkinsop before I left the Park. Oh, he didn't get them; if he had we should never have seen them again. One hears pretty often of saving one's bacon, but, by Jove, my dear, you've saved your diamonds."

Their brief sojourn in Paris was not interesting from the story-teller's point of view. They spent a great deal of money,—at least Marion did,—and Murgatroyd patiently trotted round all the sights, most of which he was seeing for the first time, as in previous visits to Paris he had not troubled about the *Hôtel des Invalides*, the *Louvre*, or any of the other sights of the place.

On the day agreed between them they crossed over to England, and Murgatroyd, after wiring to William to send to the station to meet him, went straight off to Murgatroyd Park. Somewhat to his surprise, William himself came with the carriage.

"Hullo, William! Is that you?" said Murgatroyd, in surprise.

"I thought, Mr. Laurence, that I had better come, so as to get a word or two with you private before you reached the house," said William, in mysteriously confidential tones.

"All right; get in, and we will talk it over on the way home. So Mr. Geoffrey has taken possession?"

"Taken possession, Mr. Laurence?" said the butler, spreading out his hands and looking very much like an antiquated owl in the dim light of the carriage. "Taken possession, sir! Anybody would imagine that poor master had left the Park to Mr. Geoffrey instead of to yourself. He comes in, and he says, 'William, get me the blue room ready.' 'The blue room?' says I; 'Mr. Laurence,'—begging your pardon, Mr. Murgatroyd, that was what I said,—'Mr. Laurence he ain't here, sir.' 'I didn't ask you whether Mr. Laurence was here,' said Mr. Geoffrey, quite cool; 'I said get me the blue room ready, and, by God, if you don't get it ready, you old sinner, I'll wring your neck for you.' So what could I do, Mr. Laurence?"

Laurence Murgatroyd laughed. "Well, William, I really don't see what else you could do. So you had the blue room got ready; and then——?"

"Well, then Mr. Geoffrey he orders dinner, and he says to me, 'William,' he says, 'this is poor tippie to give me my first night at home; have up a bottle of that *Veuve Clicquot*.' I—I demurred at this," said William, deprecatingly, "and Mr. Geoffrey he says, 'You old sinner,' he says, 'do you want it all for your own drinking? Bring me up a bottle this minute, or I'll break your thick old skull for you.' What could I do, Mr. Laurence? And when he had finished the *Clicquot*, he says, 'Upon my soul,' he says, 'you've got very stingy here all at once. Bring me up a bottle of *Château Lafitte*.'

Well, now, Mr. Laurence," William went on, rubbing his hands together and looking appealingly at Murgatroyd, "I did grudge the bottle of Chateau Lafitte on the top of the bottle of Veuve Clicquot, that I did."

"Yes, by Jove, I expect you did! I should have thought Fin Champagne would have been more in my brother's way! And then?"

"Well, then, the next morning he says, 'I'm going to have some friends to dinner to-night.' 'You're going to give a dinner-party?' said I. 'Yes,' says he, 'and you had better lay covers for a dozen.' I had telegraphed to you, Mr. Laurence, and I had had your wire, 'Do nothing,' so I felt helpless-like; so I goes down to Mrs. Robinson and I tells her what's up. And she, poor old lady, she just sits down and she dodders. So I says to her, 'Well, Mrs. Robinson, you ain't fit to do it, ma'am; you leave it to cook and me, and we'll see that there's something to eat.' Something to eat, Mr. Laurence! When Mr. Geoffrey comes in at lunch-time he says, 'Bring me the menu of the dinner for to-night.' You might have knocked me down with a feather, Mr. Murgatroyd; I hadn't got no menu. But I says, 'Yes, sir,' and I went down to cook, and I says, 'Cook,' I says, 'have you got the menu for Mr. Geoffrey?' And cook she says something about a rum start, and all the others thought it a rum start, and so did I. But, Mr. Laurence, if you'd seen the company as come to eat that there dinner! Well, sir, they was enough to make the poor master turn in his grave. I never see such a set in all my life. There was the barmaid from the King's Head at Burghley. In general they have decent barmaids at the King's Head: I don't know where they picked up this beauty from. There was the head groom from Lord Oakley's, and all the rest; upon my word, Mr. Laurence, I don't know where they came from. I never see such goings-on in our dining-room afore. They ate with their knives——"

"Oh, there are plenty of people do that," put in Laurence, in a quizzical tone.

"Perhaps they do, but not in our dining-room. They called for their wine in season and out of season; they had liqueurs after the fish; and I wonder they didn't all die when they got home."

"I suppose they would if you had had your will, William?"

"Maybe they would, sir. Anyway, there's not a horse in the stable that's not about done for; Rogers is only hanging on till you come back and settle things one way or another; Mrs. Robinson have took to her bed, and lies there moaning like a cat out on the tiles; and the hole in the cellar—well, Mr. Laurence——"

"Oh, well, William, that can soon be repaired; that's not a great matter. Of course my brother really has no right to come and inflict himself on my house in this way, and I shall take care to put a stop to it, but for the rest—I don't want to have a scene. You can let the others know that I shall make it up to them. By the bye, William," said Murgatroyd, as they were nearing the Park, "does Mr. Geoffrey know that I am coming?"

"No, sir, I did not mention it," said William. "I thought it

would be better that you should come in unawares and see how things really are."

If he had spoken out his own real thoughts he would have said, "come and catch him red-handed." However, he dressed up the unpalatable sentence somewhat, and then the brougham drew up at the principal entrance. A scared young footman opened the door for them, and Murgatroyd walked quietly into the house.

He had no need to ask where his brother was. A telltale odor of tobacco and the sound of much laughter proceeding from the billiard-room made him turn his steps immediately in that direction. Without saying a word, he threw open the door and walked in. The sight that met his eyes was astonishing enough. His brother Geoffrey was leaning over the billiard-table in the act of making a stroke; several other men of singularly unprepossessing appearance were standing or lounging in various attitudes round the room. At the moment of his entrance Geoffrey did not perceive his brother. Then he stopped short in his stroke, the laugh froze upon his lips, and he slowly straightened himself into a standing position. For a moment or two the brothers stood and looked at each other in silence.

"May I ask," said Murgatroyd, at last, in cold and cutting accents, "what you are doing here, and who are these people?"

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

### JOCKEYED !

WHEN Murgatroyd put that question to his brother, "What are you doing here, and who are these people?" a silence fell upon the room which was positively ghastly. At last Geoffrey Murgatroyd spoke.

"I am here," he said, thickly, "in the exercise of my rights."

"Your rights!" echoed Laurence. "Indeed? And what are your rights? I was under the impression that this house belonged to me,—that I was master here.—No, pray don't go," he said to the onlookers, who were one and all edging to the door; "my brother would doubtless like you to remain for the moment.—Since when," turning to Geoffrey, "did you acquire the right to fill my house with guests, to give your orders to my servants, to drink my wines, and make yourself thoroughly at home here?"

"I am not going to tell you before all these," said Geoffrey, still speaking in a thick, uncertain voice. "I have the right to stay here, to be here, to look on this house as my own, and I think, when I have had ten minutes' talk with you, you will admit as much."

"I think not," said Laurence, in decided, metallic accents. "This is not the first time within the last month that you came uninvited to this house,—that you came against its master's wish and decision,—but I think it will be the last."

"Clear out!" said Geoffrey sulkily to his companions.

The uncomfortable guests were gone as in the twinkling of an eye.

As the door closed behind the last of them, Laurence Murgatroyd turned once more to his brother.

"Now," he said, "what have you to say for yourself?"

"Perhaps more," sneered Geoffrey, "than you will find palatable."

"I think not. Nothing that such a one as you could say could in any wise affect me or even annoy me. I give you half an hour to clear out of this house for good and all. If you are not gone in that time, I shall put you out."

"I don't think you will."

"Don't you? Well, I am sure of it."

"Do you mean it?" asked Geoffrey.

"I do, every word of it."

"You won't when you have heard all that I have got to say."

"Then say it. What have you got up your sleeve? Something villanous, I'll be bound."

"Well, first and foremost," said Geoffrey, propping himself against the edge of the billiard-table, "I have got the motive that actuates most of us, the desire to look after number one; and while you've been swaggering about with your regiment, cutting a dash with the old man's money,—old brute that he was,—I've been looking after my own interests."

"Make yourself clearer," said Murgatroyd.

"I will. Our respected progenitor made a will——"

"He made several," corrected Laurence.

"One by which he left me four hundred pounds a year for life, payable in monthly instalments,—in monthly instalments, indeed?"

"It was a good deal more than you deserved," said Laurence, deliberately.

"That's as may be. It was not as much as my right. Why should one son have everything and the other a mere pittance?"

"Because I stayed with my father and was at one with him always. Because I was a good son and you were a blackguard. Because I never gave him half an hour's real anxiety in my life, and you never gave him anything else. Because he despised you and was ashamed of you, blushed for you. Because he knew that if he left you more than an allowance you would make ducks and drakes of it. Because he knew that you would fill your house, as you have filled my house to-day, with people who were a disgrace to you. Because he knew you were a bad lot, a thorough bad lot. That was why, Geoffrey Murgatroyd."

"Yes, it's all very pretty," said Geoffrey, with a sneer, "but the governor made another will,—a will by which you didn't come off quite so well,—a will by which you only took Murgatroyd Park on a certain condition: eh?"

"Well?"

"Well, that will fell into my possession."

"That is a lie," said Murgatroyd, hotly. "If that will is in your possession you stole it; so to your other distinguished characteristics you can add that of thief, sir."

"Yes, I can add that of thief. I stole it. I came to try and coax the old brute into a more amiable frame of mind; by Jove, I even

promised reformation and impossible things of that kind! He wouldn't hear me. He told me I was no son of his, that I was a blackguard and a scoundrel, and the Lord knows what besides,—still, things I had heard fifty times before——”

“And I should think,” said Laurence, “the kind of thing you would be likely to hear fifty times again,—you, a man who stole into an old man's sick-room, a dying man's room, and did not hesitate to open his private safe like a common thief in the night! I thought when I heard that you had done it that you were after our mother's diamonds,—not worse. So you got the will, did you?”

“I did. It leaves me four hundred pounds a year. Four hundred a year don't suit my book; it is a mere pittance. I've a right to more. I intend to have more. I took it, intending to destroy it, knowing that you would get the estate, and thinking that I should get my share of the personalty. Then that cursed old fool Blenkinsop turns up another rotten will and balks me, by Jove,—balks me clean.”

“Yes,” murmured Murgatroyd, “Providence has a little way of frustrating evil designs sometimes.”

“Providence! Bah! I don't want any of that cant.”

“Fortunately,” said Laurence, deliberately, “you are not the one who either pays the piper or sets the tune in this house, and you never will be.”

“I don't know so much about that. I intend to set a tune to you to-day, my affectionate brother, that you will dance to; you will dance to it, or I'm much mistaken.”

“Then,” said Murgatroyd, “I can answer for it that you are much mistaken, for dance to a tune of yours, Geoffrey, I never will. You destroyed my father's will? That means seven years.”

“It does; or, rather, it would if I had destroyed it. As a matter of fact, I have got it in my possession now. Now, to put the matter plain and square, it doesn't suit me to live on four hundred a year, when I know there's forty thousand a year rolling into your coffers. It's too much of a one-sided bargain for me, Laurence, and the question is, How shall we share it?”

“Share it? Share what?”

“The estate. I have taken the risk, and I'm quite willing to make myself agreeable by taking the share that you don't want, but one or the other I mean to have. The only question is, which?”

“You want me,” said Laurence, “to make a bargain with you for the suppression of the will which you stole?”

“That's about it,” answered Geoffrey.

“Then I absolutely refuse to do anything of the kind; I refuse to make any terms with you.”

“You do?”

“I do.”

“And do you realize what you are saying? It's all one to me,—I get my four hundred a year clear for the rest of my life by either will,—but so sure as you refuse me, Laurence, that will—the one in my possession—the one leaving everything to you on a condition which

would be very hard to fill—finds its way straight to that old fool Blenkinsop."

"Let it find its way to Blenkinsop; it won't find its way there too soon."

"Do you know what is in it?"

"Yes, I know what is in it."

"You know the condition?"

"I know the condition."

"Twenty thousand pounds?"

"Yes, twenty thousand pounds. I do more than refuse you. I refuse to accept any dishonorable bargain at your hands. I believed that our father had destroyed that will, considering it unjust. It seems that you had stolen it. So, let the will stand. Send it at once to Mr. Blenkinsop; he will know what to do with it better than I. As for your suggestion that I should stoop to buy you off, you ought to have known me better. Not for all the money in the world would I sell myself into the bondage of such a thing as you are. Now, if I know anything of the terms of that will, this house for two years from my father's death is mine. Clear out of it, or, by the Lord above us, I'll break your neck."

For a moment Geoffrey Murgatroyd stood gazing incredulously at his brother.

"Laurence," he said, "do you mean it?"

"I mean it." And he pointed silently to the door.

Geoffrey staggered out into the great entrance hall. His scheme had failed; the bombshell had fallen flat; the *dénouement* had proved pointless; he himself was left in such a state of blank consternation that only three words found their way to his whitened lips. "Jockeyed, by God!" he muttered.

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

### MR. BLENKINSOP TO THE RESCUE.

LAURENCE MURGATROYD was a man in whom action was always remarkably rapid. It was very seldom that he cared to think out a situation, and on that occasion, when he had seen his brother out of the room, and knew that he was gone out of the house, he did not hesitate for the space of five minutes as to what would be his best plan to follow. He rang the bell sharply.

"Oh, William," he said, when the servant came, "I wish that you would order me the brougham, or a dog-cart if there is not a fast horse fit to go. I must go into Burghley immediately."

"Will you dine here to-night, sir?"

"Upon my word I don't know. No, I think not. I must see Mr. Blenkinsop on business without delay. I may have to follow him home: in that case he will be sure to give me some dinner. Has my brother gone?"

"Yes, sir, Mr. Geoffrey have gone, and he have told James

to put his things together and take them to the Rose and Crown at Burghley."

"Very good. They can go in by cart, I suppose; I can wait for nothing. I must see Mr. Blenkinsop immediately."

In a quarter of an hour or so Laurence Murgatroyd was tearing down the avenue, going towards Burghley as fast as the best horse in the stables could carry him. When he reached the lawyer's office he found that Mr. Blenkinsop had gone home.

"You think he has gone home?" he asked of the clerk, who was just stamping the letters for the day.

"I am as sure of it, sir, as I well can be of anything," the young man replied. "Mr. Blenkinsop said to me, 'Well, I shall be getting home now.' I think if you go out to Heatherdene you will find him."

When Laurence Murgatroyd reached Heatherdene, however, Mr. Blenkinsop had not yet returned.

"I want to see him on most important business," he explained to the man who answered the door.

"Perhaps Miss Blenkinsop could tell you where the master is," the man suggested. "I believe he is expected home to dinner, sir."

"Well, ask Miss Blenkinsop. I must see your master to-night."

Thereupon the servant went in search of his mistress, who presently came,—a tall, angular lady, some years older than her brother, who was himself quite an elderly man.

"You want to see my brother on business, Mr. Murgatroyd?"

"On most important business, Miss Susanna," said Murgatroyd, promptly reverting into the ways of his boyhood.

"Well, really, I think the best thing will be for you to wait. He will be back by a quarter past seven for certain. I believe, you know, that he always looks in at the club. He says to look at the papers—fiddle! I believe for the sake of the gossip. Will you stay and take pot-luck with us? Then you can talk over your business with my brother afterwards without spoiling the dinner of either of you."

"Oh, thank you; you are most awfully kind. Indeed, my business is most important, or I would not have come at this unearthly hour."

"I don't call it an unearthly hour myself," said Miss Blenkinsop; "indeed, quite the contrary. There's a good dinner going, and you may as well help to eat it as go back to the Park for your own."

So Murgatroyd followed the old lady into the spacious drawing-room, and sat down with what patience he could to await the coming of his father's old friend and legal adviser. He came at last, ten minutes before the hour fixed for dinner, and was full of surprise when he found who was awaiting him.

"My dear Laurence! I hope you have no bad news?"

"Some very disconcerting news, Mr. Blenkinsop," said Laurence, who was in no mood to let his errand leak out by degrees.

Then he told him everything.

"I told him at once that he was to send the will to you, that I absolutely refused to connive at suppressing it. For the sake of my

father's name you will connive so far that you will find it?" he said, entreatingly.

"By way of sparing Geoffrey! I don't see why Geoffrey should be spared," said Mr. Blenkinsop, dryly. "However, that's a simple matter enough. The question is, Laurence, that all this will considerably alter your position. You will have to look out for that heiress after all."

"It's no use my looking out for that heiress, Mr. Blenkinsop," said Laurence, quietly. "I have settled that condition."

"What do you mean?"

Laurence smiled. "My dear sir," he said, "I have been married for more than two years."

"The deuce you have! Then that was why none of those young ladies took your fancy?"

"Well, yes, it was."

"I see. Oh! And she has no money?"

"Not a penny."

"Dear, dear! that's very bad. Is she——?"

"Oh, she's all right: she's a lady."

"I need hardly ask if she's pretty?"

"Pretty? You know her."

"I know her?"

"Yes. She came to nurse my father when he was so ill."

"Good heavens! You don't mean it! That was your wife?"

"Yes, Mr. Blenkinsop, that is my wife."

It was not often that the grave old lawyer did anything thoroughly modern, but his astonishment at Murgatroyd's news was so great that he was obliged to give vent to his feelings by a long low whistle.

"Oh! that's the way the cat jumps! So this is a worse blow to you than even that scamp Geoffrey dreamed of?"

"I am afraid it is. However, I suppose I shall have the two years' income, and we must make out on that. It won't be starvation."

"I must think," said the old lawyer, who, strange to say, was one of those persons who have a rooted objection to large legacies being left to any sort of institution. "I must think, Laurence. Let us have our dinner. Don't discuss this before my sister; ladies are not always as reticent as might be. I must think. We will have a glass of my '47 port,—excellent wine; I don't often indulge in it, but when I want to think hard I open a bottle. I hope the dinner is very good to-night: there's nothing like a good dinner and a glass of sound wine for showing the way out of a difficult situation. Remember, not a word to Miss Blenkinsop."

Murgatroyd promised a complete silence, and followed his genial old host into the dining-room, feeling as if everything was going to work into a smooth and harmonious whole.

It was not until Miss Blenkinsop had betaken herself to her own place, and her brother was enjoying his third glass of the celebrated '47, that any solution appeared to the mystery of Murgatroyd's present situation. Then he pushed the bottle over and bade Laurence help himself.

"It won't hurt you, my boy; there's not a headache in it."

"You've got an idea, Mr. Blenkinsop," said Laurence, eying the elder man.

"Yes, yes, I have an idea. You see, Laurence, my dear boy, you are my godson."

"I believe I am. I did not remember it, but I have always heard so," said Laurence.

"Oh, I can vouch for it. I promised and vowed all sorts of things in your name, and up to the present time, beyond having presented you with the usual spoon and fork and pap-basin, I have really done nothing for you,—nothing at all. Now, when your father made that extraordinary will the other day,—the will which, by the bye, I did everything I could to prevent his making, the will that Nurse Marion—your wife, by Jove—refused to sign—"

"Did she, though?"

"Yes. I made a new will, in which I left a good share of my property to you."

"Oh, Mr. Blenkinsop!"

"Well, you needn't say, 'Oh, Mr. Blenkinsop!' in that tone, Laurence; I didn't intend you to have it until I had quite done with it. I have left my sister the whole of my property for her life, and it is to revert to you at her death. I was practically bound to do something with it. I am fairly well off,—not rich like your father, no, but I should cut up very tidily. Yes, I've been thinking, this evening, that I must be worth a hundred and twenty thousand pounds, and if it should please the Almighty to take me before my sister, who is six or seven years older than I am,—I don't tell everybody that, you know; ladies don't like these little things mentioned; ladies have a very strong objection—most ladies—particularly when they are getting on,—and if it should please the Almighty to take me before my sister, I could leave her the income of a sum of a hundred thousand pounds, or near to it, and she would not miss any of the luxuries which she has enjoyed as my companion and housekeeper; so that if I was to make your charming little wife—whom you must have married from a right and proper motive, the only motive for which marriages should be made,—that is not my legal opinion, Laurence, that is my god-fatherly opinion,—if I were to make a free gift of the necessary twenty thousand pounds to your wife, there would be no question of any of my old friend's property going where I am quite sure in his right mind—I don't mean his sane mind exactly, but in his moments of calm and rational consideration—he would greatly regret that it should go. You see, Laurence," putting up his hand to stop the torrent of thanks which had crowded to Murgatroyd's lips, "the will does not specify that the money shall come from the lady's father; it distinctly says, 'a lady possessed of not less than twenty thousand pounds.' So I think that that will safely meet all the requirements of the case. As for that scamp Geoffrey, I really feel quite sorry that your natural pride in your father's name prevents you from getting him a little term of residence in a place where his morals would be very well looked after, and where he would be out of the way of temptation for some little

time to come. However, it is very sad to punish the innocent for the guilty, and I am afraid we must let Geoffrey go this time."

"Mr. Blenkinsop," said Laurence, in a voice that was husky with emotion, "I don't know what to say to you. You've always been good to me, and I am sure, if my dear old dad could know what you have done, he would be very grateful to you. At least I know I am."

"I don't know about your father; he might think I was interfering in somebody else's business," said Mr. Blenkinsop. "However, he made the condition, and, to tell you the truth, Laurence, I purposely left a loophole by which you could, if you wanted to marry some dowerless lady, do so without finding yourself bereft of your natural and legitimate inheritance. Now don't say a word, my dear boy; remember that godfathers have privileges when they have neither chick nor child of their own. Not another word. Another glass of '47, my dear boy, and let us drink health, happiness, and prosperity to Mrs. Murgatroyd of Murgatroyd Park."

It was something less than a year after this that Mr. Blenkinsop rose from his seat at Marion Murgatroyd's left hand and proposed a health.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "let me ask you, when your glasses are charged, to drink a bumper to the health of John Brandon Murgatroyd, the little heir to this house, whom to-day we saw made a member of Holy Church,—my godchild."

THE END.

## GOVERNMENT BY "GENTLEMEN."

THE judgment of the member of Parliament for Dublin University that university representation in Parliament is of great value to the nation would fall upon the lay mind with all the weight of an expert opinion were it not coupled with the statement that many of the misguided persons who oppose this system, and "who are doing their best to reduce the influence of education and intelligence in English politics, are highly cultivated men who owe to university education all that they are." The man of books is asking too much of the world when he asks it to believe that any men owe all or nearly all that they are to their education.

"Liberty and Democracy" is a Book of Lamentations over the decadence of "the old belief, or prejudice, or superstition, that the administration of government ought to be chiefly intrusted to gentlemen," and by the last word the author means the landed aristocracy, for the "doctrine that the men to whom the land belonged were the men who ought to govern it" appears to him fundamental. This identification of the soil with the men who live upon it, which might be passed over as a weak pun on the word "land," was the feudal principle that made a part of the tillers of the soil the property of its owner, a principle that has survived to our own times in Russian serfdom, and in the laws of some of our States that once treated slaves as real estate. It assumes, what seems to Mr. Lecky too plain to require argument, that the right of property in land is superior to the right of property in anything else. While he might not admit this, the distinction which is always present in his mind rests upon the fact that the right of property in land runs back to the gentlemanly art of conquest, and takes its starting-point from the sword, while the rights of property in nearly all other things rest upon so humble and servile a thing as labor, and start from the right of every man to himself and to the work of his own hands.

The soil of England passed to the Normans by conquest. It was parcelled out among military chiefs, who held it as tenants of the crown, which was the state. For it they rendered services to the state. They provided it with its military forces; they supplied it with most of its revenue. Taking advantage of their growing power, these lords wrested from the state the right of succession, so that they could transmit land to heirs who were incapable of rendering military service. Then, acting in the double capacity of the state and the tenants of the state, they commuted their military services for money payment. Next, as the state, they decreed for themselves as its tenants that their payments should never be increased, while as landlords they retained, and have abundantly exercised, the right of increasing the payments to be made to them by their sub-tenants. Some of the soil had been left free for the common use of the sub-tenants, who on these commons pastured a cow, an ass, or a few sheep. Acting as a national legislature, the

great lords confiscated these commons, on the pretext that they could put them to much better uses than the peasantry could, and at the same time these philanthropists and economists evicted whole villages and swept wide stretches of country bare of human habitation to make sheep pastures and game preserves. At present the lords who succeeded the chief tenants of the state pay to the state an insignificant proportion of what they exact from their sub-tenants, and the cost of supporting the government has been pushed off upon the shoulders of the rest of the nation; it has been transferred from land to labor, while the land is made the private wealth of seven thousand persons. Is there anything in the programme of socialism, not to speak of American democracy, that would be a more flagrant spoliation by force than this acquisition of the soil of England by its present holders, and does it lie in the mouths of English landlords and their literary employees to accuse democracy of undermining the rights of property and having indistinct notions of the difference between *meum* and *tuum*?

Two of the most serious indictments against democracy brought by Mr. Lecky are that it is sordid and venal, and that it has corrupted political life by patronage or the spoils system. Mr. Henry James has drawn the picture of a man who married a woman for her money, who referred to the fact that he had never tried to earn a dollar as a sufficient defence against the accusation of being a money-lover. The idea that English gentlemen, who have their money given to them by their fathers, or their American fathers-in-law, are less susceptible to the charms of wealth than American democrats who have earned their money, is almost too ingenuous even for a gentleman who writes books for the British aristocracy to buy. Of the relative venality of the two we shall have occasion to take notice in considering the pollution of pure gentlemanly politics by democracy and its accursed spoils system. Of the social value of money in England and America Mr. James Bryce says that "a millionaire has a better and easier social career open to him in England than in America. . . . In America, if his private character be bad, if he be mean, or openly immoral, or personally vulgar, or dishonest, the best society will keep its doors closed against him. In England great wealth, skilfully employed, will more readily force these doors to open. For in England great wealth can, by using the appropriate methods, practically buy rank from those who bestow it. . . . The existence of a system of artificial rank enables a stamp to be given to base metal in Europe which cannot be given in a thoroughly republican country."

The spoils system is as objectionable to the present writer as it can be to any one. He compiled and published in the *Political Science Quarterly* the statistics of a recent nearly "clean sweep" which Mr. Lecky quotes and attributes to another writer in another periodical. But the spoils system is not political corruption in any such sense as Mr. Lecky supposes. Offices are not given to influence the votes of men. They are given to men whose loyalty to party organizations has already been proved by their services in campaigning and in political management. The process no more resembles bribery than the bestowal of Cabinet offices or the creation of bishops in England.

Patronage is essentially a royal and aristocratic institution. It is an exotic in the United States, and after running its course of two generations is undoubtedly beginning to decay. In England its destruction is one of the achievements of the extension of the suffrage, of the growth of democracy, of the waning power of the gentlemen in government. The spoils system, which Mr. Lecky says has in the United States "spread like a leprosy over all political life, and to which there is, I believe, no adequate parallel in history," is English and gentlemanly, and has had something more than its parallel in Mr. Lecky's own time and in a country with whose history he is reputed to be perfectly familiar. "The gigantic corruption which exists in America under the name of the spoils system has not taken root in England," he wrote, in astonishing forgetfulness of the fact that it was not then forty years since the English civil service commission made its first report of its preliminary efforts to uproot the same gigantic corruption.

Only one American Cabinet officer has used his patronage to eke out his salary, and he did it in secret; when exposure came he resigned, and the House of Representatives impeached him before the bar of the Senate. But the Parliamentary Civil Service Papers of 1855 give the objections of a Secretary of State to the abolition of patronage because "the range of choice [of the principal ministers of the crown] will become still more narrow . . . if the remuneration of these great offices be further reduced by depriving the holders of them of all their most valuable patronage. . . . Considering the long habituation of the people to political contests in which the share of office, not merely for its emoluments, but also for the sake of influencing administration, reckons among the legitimate prizes of war [to the victors belong the spoils], . . . and that rank and wealth hold the keys of many things, . . . I should hesitate long before I advised such a revolution of the civil service." The same Parliamentary papers say of a state of things then existing, "The most feeble sons in families which have been so fortunate as to obtain an appointment, yes, and others, too, either mentally or physically incapacitated, enter the service. . . . Almost every branch of the permanent civil service is connected more or less with politics. . . . The selection of officers generally proceeds on political grounds and for political purposes." A Parliamentary report of five years later says, "Where the spirit of patronage rules, the appointments are given to a great extent as a reward for political services, without the least reference to the ability, knowledge, or fitness of the persons appointed." No less a witness than Mr. Lowe testified before a Parliamentary committee in 1873, "Under the former system I suppose there was never such a thing known as a man being appointed to a clerkship in a public office because he was supposed to be fit for the place."

The purchase of offices was a little earlier recognized as affording a claim for compensation if dispossessed. An Act of 1809 for "the further prevention of the sale and brokerage of offices" provided that if any one had an office which he had taken "on an agreement to pay a charge or part of the profits to a former holder," he should remain liable for such payments, and the officers of the court of chancery in Ireland, having bought their places, were allowed to sell them. An

act was passed in 1825 for the purchase by the government from the hereditary owner of two public offices, one in the court of king's bench and the other in the common pleas. It is scarcely more than twenty-five years since the House of Lords refused to assent to the abolition of purchase in the army, and the reform was accomplished by royal warrant. Patronage in the Church remains in full vigor, and an agnostic or a reprobate by virtue of his land-ownership may name the pastors for a score of congregations. A cure of souls is an article of merchandise among gentlemen who are free from that sordid and money-loving taint that comes from democracy. It was such a pastor who recently prosecuted the daughter of one of his parishioners for trespassing in "his" churchyard and damaging "his" hay by visiting her sister's grave and placing flowers thereon, for which he claimed one shilling and sixpence, and would have got it if he had been a rector instead of a perpetual curate.

Systematic Parliamentary bribery ceased in England a century ago, but in Congress nothing of the kind ever existed. We have never had anything resembling the practice described by Lord Beaconsfield in a speech in Parliament in which he said, "Why, before the American war, a period not yet very remote, the Secretary of the Treasury used to sit at the gangway and at a stated period of the session, the end or the beginning, gave in the House to the members who supported the government a routine *douceur* of a five-hundred-pound note, which was as little looked upon as bribery as head-money by a freeman. [A voice, "Walpole."] No, no; much later than Walpole, and quite distinct from secret bribery. It was a practice which the manners of the age and the low tone of public feeling permitted." The tone of public feeling in the present democratic age would not permit anything of that sort, and it would not even tolerate such an act as that of Mr. Fox, who made to Lord Orford, through the latter's uncle, an offer of a place worth two thousand pounds a year in consideration of his "and his friend Boone's hearty assistance." "This is offering you a bribe," he explained, frankly, "but 'tis such a one as one honest, good-natured man may without offence offer to another." Fox believed that the office of commissioner of trade and plantations was given to Gibbon as a bribe, and expressed himself in the lines,—

King George, in a fright  
Lest Gibbon should write  
The story of England's disgrace,  
Thought no way so sure  
His pen to secure  
As to give the historian place.

"George III.," says a "careful observer" cited by John Richard Green, "reserved for himself all the patronage; he arranged the whole cast of the administration, . . . nominated and promoted the English and Scotch judges, appointed and translated bishops and deans, and dispensed other preferments in the Church. He disposed of military governments, regiments, and commissions. . . . All this immense patronage was steadily used for the creation of a party in both Houses of Par-

liament attached to the king himself." No adequate parallel could be found by Mr. Lecky for the American spoils system, and yet these things were done in "England in the Eighteenth Century." The force of these examples is not broken by the suggestion that the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were a long time ago. His contention is that democracy is lowering the tone of political life, and we may go to any English historian, himself included, for evidence of what was the tone of political life before the rise of democracy. Nor does it avail Mr. Lecky anything that he admits the benefits of the Reform Act of 1832 and grumbles about the Act of 1867. The belief of elderly gentlemen that affairs have deteriorated sadly since they were young is too common to be impressive.

Indeed, we do not need to go back of this century, or outside of "Liberty and Democracy," to see what government was when it was carried on by gentlemen. Mr. Lecky quotes Paley's statement that "about one-half of the House of Commons obtain their seats in that assembly by the election of the people, the other half by purchase or by nomination of single proprietors of great estates." "In the early period of this century," he says, "a great and dominating section of the peerage consisted of men who were directly bound to the crown by places or pensions; while the indirect advantages of the peerage in the distribution of the vast patronage in church and state were so great that the whole body was bound to the existing system of government by personal and selfish motives of the strongest kind." And yet it is democracy, is it, that has made politics abject, sordid, and selfish?

Mr. Lecky's admiration of independence in politics is eclectic. The ballot "is essentially an evil" for the reason, so obvious that he does not deem it necessary to mention it, that the ballot makes a voter independent of his landlord or his employer. In Parliamentary life he deplores a member's dependence upon the will of the people or their representatives; and he evidently deplores equally their independence of the crown and the great nobles, though he does not say so. "The caucus system—which is but another name for the American machine, and which, like the American machine, is mainly managed by a small number of active politicians," he mourns, "has grown with portentous rapidity. It nominates the candidates for elections. It dictates their policy in all its details. . . . It reduces the ordinary member of Parliament to the position of a mere delegate or puppet." How much more independent members of Parliament were in the good old days when gentlemen governed, and when, as Queen Caroline wrote to George IV. in 1820, in a letter cited by Mr. Lecky, "The far greater part of the peers hold by themselves and their families pensions and emoluments solely at the will and pleasure of Your Majesty. There are more than four-fifths of the peers in this situation." Mr. Lecky also quotes the statement of Wilberforce in 1811 that more than half of the House of Lords "had been created or gifted with their titles" since 1780, and the special object of these creations had been to make the House completely subservient to the crown and to the executive. He also cites contemporaneous evidence that in 1816, "out of the five hundred and thirteen members who then represented England and Wales, no less

than two hundred and eighteen were returned by the influence or nomination of eighty-seven peers. Scotland was represented by forty-five members, of whom thirty-one were returned by twenty-one peers. Ireland was represented by one hundred members, of whom fifty-one were returned by thirty-six peers. Six peers returned no less than forty-five members to the House of Commons."

Not less curious than the complaint that democracy is robbing members of Parliament of their independence is the complaint that English radicalism aims at "the withdrawal of the control of affairs from the hands of the minority, who in the competitions of life have risen to a higher plane of fortune and instruction," whereas the minority in whose hands Mr. Lecky would leave the control of affairs was born to fortune and instruction and saved from those competitions of life by which the representatives of democracy have risen to higher planes of fortune and instruction.

But, while he is anxious to see the control of affairs left in the hands of this favored few, Mr. Lecky thinks that "few greater misfortunes can befall a young man than to inherit at an early age such a fortune as places at his feet an ample range of enjoyments without the necessity of any kind of labor." These owners of the soil who ought to rule the people who live on the soil, but have incurred in early life one of the greatest misfortunes that can befall young men, are guilty of "an enormous over-preservation of game," which has "diminished the productiveness of great areas of English land, brought into the country a new form of extravagant luxury, and essentially altered and lowered the character of field sports." By them "the slaughter of countless beasts and birds is treated as if it were a main object of existence. Life is looked down upon as from an opera-box, till all sense of its seriousness seems to vanish, and the conflicts of parties are followed with a merely sporting interest." These providential rulers of the nation take their political responsibilities so lightly that usually only a fifth of them are in attendance, "and important decisions have sometimes been taken in the presence of not more than a dozen members. . . . A few remarks, chiefly addressed to the reporters, by a leader of the House, by a leader of the opposition, by a great lawyer on each side, and perhaps—if the dinner-hour is not too near—by one or two independent peers, usually constitute its debates."

They may be absent when merely national interests are pending, but they are present when land legislation is pending,—when their personal interests are involved. The Irish land bill brought to the House of Lords in August of last year noblemen who had not been seen there for many years, and when the section giving tenants certain rights to bog and heather was under consideration the Earl of Mayo asked, plaintively, "When they were in the middle of a grouse-drive, would noble lords like to see a tenant come and cut heather?"

Mr. Lecky's conception of the purposes of our political activity are as inadequate as his ideas about our political methods are erroneous. Nothing could be more superficial than the remarks of this historian and philosopher that there is "no country in the world in which the motives that inspire them [political contests] are more purely or more

abjectly sordid" than in the United States. In Europe "there is always some real principle at issue, some powerful element of unselfish enthusiasm. In America this does not appear to be the case." Many of the real principles that animate European politics find no place in ours because the battle over them has been fought and the right has won. We are so much more advanced that we are agreed on matters over which European politicians are still struggling. We have no *kulturkampf*, because we have separated Church and State. We have no struggles for civil or religious liberty, for we have secured both. We have no party trying to curtail mediæval imperialism, for we need none. We have no dynastic wars, for we have no dynasty; no foreign politics in the European sense, for we have happily no dangerous neighbors. We have no occasion to fear for our own possessions, and we do not covet those of others. We have no great landlords proving that they are neither abject, sordid, nor selfish by fighting every effort to extort from them some return to the nation for what the nation has conferred upon them, and ready to sacrifice every public and private interest that interferes with their grouse-hunting. If our politics are more simple than those of Europe, it is because we have outgrown royalty and ecclesiasticism. If our parties are more alike than those of European countries, it is because there is less for us to differ over. If our political issues are smaller than those of Europe, it is because we have already decided the greater issues.

From the beginning of our history to the present day, however, we have been divided over the question, neither abject, sordid, nor selfish, whether the greatest good of the greatest number required that we should give the government the greatest power consistent with local and individual liberty, or whether we should give the local community and the individual the greatest freedom consistent with national unity and efficiency. The long contest over slavery was not abject, sordid, or selfish on one side at least, and in ending it we certainly proved to the world that whatever nobility there is in a readiness to fight and in a capacity for fighting as long as necessary on one side and as long as possible on the other, we of both North and South possessed.

The spreading of our domain from a fringe along the Atlantic coast till we made the Mississippi a domestic stream and the Pacific Ocean stopped our progress, is not more abject, sordid, or selfish than the spread of the British empire around the world. What issue of European politics, not a mere inheritance from feudalism and aristocracy, not due to international fears and envies, is of deeper interest or wider importance than the great economic question of the relation of foreign commerce to national prosperity, of which one side is represented by the policy of Great Britain and the other by that of all the great nations of the Continent? And if some of our people have lately pursued a mistaken course regarding a rather abstruse problem in finance, democracy is not to be indicted therefor. Their errors have been the besetting sins of the monarchs and the ruling classes of every kingdom in Europe, and the American democracy sustained in the most emphatic manner the conclusions that have been reached by the world's financiers but have not been very long accepted by the governments

of those happy states that, in the phrase of Lord Beaconsfield, consist of Monarch and Multitude.

Mr. Lecky has seen fit to quote with kindly qualified approval Carlyle's opinion that the chief feat of the United States had been to beget "with a rapidity beyond recorded example eighteen million of the greatest bores ever seen in this world before." As the only citizens of this country whom Carlyle met were those who, though neither sordid nor selfish, were abject enough to make pilgrimages to the man who lost no opportunity of insulting them and their country, we can easily forgive him his opinion of us. But both Carlyle and Mr. Lecky make the mistake of supposing that democratic government was begotten by some abstract theory that the majority of a people are wiser and better than the minority. Doubtless the "count of heads and clack of tongues" does not give the best conceivable government, but in actual practice—not in libraries and studies, but in real life—what other system gives better results? Doubtless there is in every country a minority that is better and wiser than the majority of the people, but how often is that minority the ruling class? If one go so far with the Churl of Chelsea as to admit that a Napoleon's ability to acquire power proves him the fittest to exercise power, what does that prove as to the fitness of a ruler whose only claim to power is that he is the son of the son of the son of a hero?

The growth of democracy is not due to any *a priori* notions of the superior virtue or wisdom of the masses of the people, but to the thoroughly demonstrated selfishness, greed, vice, and military ambitions of kings and nobles. The people have undertaken to govern themselves because for generation after generation the gentlemen misgoverned them: if they were not sordid or selfish, they certainly made a good thing out of it for themselves, and the multitude bore the blows, shed the blood, and paid the bills, till they wearied of it. It was when the gentlemen were in undisputed possession of all branches of the government that Parliament passed stringent laws to prevent workmen from combining to get better wages and repealed the statute of apprentices, which had been the law of England since Elizabeth, because it obstructed the employers in getting cheap and especially child labor. Men were transported for seven years for combination and left to discover by accident that the government had been compelled by an outraged public sentiment to pardon them. Eight years before the Reform Act of 1832 a Parliamentary committee reported that the courts had often and severely punished workmen for combining to get their wages raised, but had in no case punished employers for combining to reduce wages.

It is not abstract theories about the superiority of the masses or even about the rights of man that have spread democracy, but the way the gentlemen have governed. Mr. Lecky himself is not unconscious of the deficiencies of gentlemen when called on to rule others than themselves, for he admits that "the presence of a spiritual element did not prevent the upper House from being behind the House of Commons in the great work of diminishing and at last abolishing the horrors of the slave-trade; and the authority of some great lawyers

who sat in the House of Lords was the direct cause of its opposition to some of the most necessary legal reforms, and especially to the mitigation of the atrocities of the criminal code." If the landed aristocracy pays very little attention to its legislative duties and spends most of its time in slaughtering countless beasts and birds, while the great lawyers oppose the most obviously necessary legal reforms, and the influence of bishops on ecclesiastical matters is a cause of regret to even Mr. Lecky, while these selected representatives of Church and Bar are alike deficient in humanity, an American democrat may be excused for asking wherein the advantages of the House of Lords as a governing body consist. Indeed, when Mr. Lecky was compelled to notice "the contrast between the too evident debility of the House of Lords in its corporate capacity and the great weight and influence of a large number of individual peers," ought it not to have occurred to him that perhaps his admiration of the lords as a ruling class rested entirely upon his personal liking for individual peers at whose tables he had dined?

The truth is that all men are selfish and most men are capable of some degree of inhumanity. The woes of one class of the community do not appeal very strongly to the feelings of another, and they scarcely appealed at all before the rise of democracy. One set of men will not govern another set of men without cruelty, and democratic government is only a large application of the primal law of self-defence. Property is as safe in the hands of the people in general as it is in the hands of that small class which gets much the greater part of it, but privilege is by no means so sacred in the eyes of the millions who have it not as it is in the eyes of the hundreds of its beneficiaries. If there be a radicalism in democracy that touches the nerve of elderly gentlemen in their libraries and at their clubs, it is only fair to remember that there is not a social crime or a political abuse that has not been passionately defended by that small and happy portion of the community that has been placed, for the most part without effort of its own, on a higher plane of fortune and instruction than the great majority of its fellows. And while democracy exists that the great body of the people may defend themselves against the bishops who care only for the Church, and the lawyers who care only for the Bar, and the landlords who care only for the chase, and kings who care only for themselves, it has no occasion to blush for its achievements in statecraft. We have acquired a continental domain, not without injustice to Indians and Mexicans, but far more respectably than any European monarchy has extended its area. We have certainly made more human beings comfortable than any monarchy has, and, while no one accuses us of commercial retrogression, we have proved that we can win victories in war no less renowned than those of peace. We protect life and property, and we do it without garrisoning our cities. All the cannon of our forts point toward the sea. We have paid our public debts, and we have maintained the financial honor of our government as well as the territorial integrity of our nation. We have given the individual man the lightest burden and the widest liberty he can find in the world, and yet the political organization that administers our public affairs is able to maintain a fair degree of the respect of the family of nations. How

much better are the actual results of government by the privileged classes?

With this growth of democracy there has been a remarkable increase in humane sentiment, and in all forms of altruistic effort, which Mr. Lecky frankly recognizes. Not till man in every class became something of a political factor did the more fortunate members of society feel much interest in improving the intelligence, the morals, and the surroundings of the less fortunate members of society. Next to the gospel, and because it is itself inspired by the gospel, democracy has done more than anything else to inculcate a belief in the brotherhood of man, to mitigate suffering, and to promote peace. Three generations of democracy have removed from the human race burdens that thirty generations of kings and nobles would never have lightened. It is incredible that political institutions should be degraded and undermined by so beneficent a force, and that in proportion as their civilization rises, and their social crimes are repented of, and the ethics of Christianity receive a more extended application by them, nations should approach political disintegration and anarchy.

*Fred. Perry Powers.*

### THE DAY OF DIALECT.

**T**HERE must be cycles of taste in literature, as there are in every other matter of man's progress.

In literature and art especially these changeful epochs are arbitrary in their recurrence; and in the newer and more busy civilization of the Cisatlantic they are more frequent, more sudden, and more arbitrary.

Only a brief glance at the musical and dramatic stage of America is needed to prove this premise. In its quickly shifting views of the amusement kaleidoscope, our public has raved over the changing fragments of grand opera, the "legitimate," bouffe, the nude drama, and that airy nothing misnamed farce-comedy. But in at least three of these cases change became the young and fecund parent of disgust. In every case, the natural taste of a healthful-minded people swiftly returned to the craving for its natural food.

What is proved true of the more visible and directly appealing forms of a country's literature must remain provable of its fiction, and of all more enduring forms; and it is safe paraphrase of accepted adage to say, Show me who writes the plays of a country, and I will show you who writes its romances. So, while the day of dialect was as long, if happily not so fatal in result, as that "summer's day" of Chevy Chase, reaction has come to the literature of broken English. And it is a safe proposition to state that the day of dialect is as dead as "the glorious Dey of Morocco," celebrated by Saxe in his apostrophe to Day and Martin of blacking memory.

Nor does it require very deep delving into cause to unearth the reason for this result. Dialect fiction was born out of that restless demand for novelty to which even the known fiction-makers of its day

were forced, in some sort or shape, to yield. And yet, hurried analysis will show that there are in it few elements of basic novelty, further than in making dialect the Aaron's rod "which swallows all the rest" of these epicene creations.

The value of quaint or unusual modes of speech—as best suggestive of uncommon traits of habit or of character—has been known to all writers of the past. Cervantes, Rabelais, Le Sage, and many of the Germans used local dialects largely. English literature teems with examples, as Chaucer, Spenser, Burns, Moore, and later Tennyson, in poetry; while in prose fiction perhaps the tales and novels of Walter Scott would be most readily recalled. But even the "Wizard of the North" never ventured upon a novel that depended wholly upon unusual or extravagant modes of speech and sought no higher and more important claim for either popular or critical approval.

In recent American fiction the dialect novel ran to the length of a sort of craze. The success of a few master hands—which used the school rather as the vehicle to an end than as a means for concealment of other weaknesses—bore unripe and unwholesome fruit. But the field became rapidly overfull, and its product soon palled upon the surfeited "general reader," while it produced acute nausea in the long-suffering professional critic. The dialect-worker may be regarded as a curse to the rising generation of fictionists, because of setting their possible success back for a decade. And this is more generally true of younger female writers,—especially, because of its local surroundings and easy temptations, to those of the South. Yet this is coldly stated truth; in spite of that reputation which imitation has brought to the few—of the dollars it has made for perhaps more—of those who chose such as their badly copied models.

The ambitious but untried novelist has doubtless rushed into dialect because it tickled her own ear, and because she believes it must continue its titillation on the ear of others. She may have studied character closely about her, as carefully as her abilities and opportunities would permit; but she fails to recall that her field of vision is limited, while much of its keen interest for herself is born of local sympathy, rather than out of a broader humanism.

She may write dialect of a special type remarkably well; unfortunately well, if that shall spur her on to further foray into that field. For it is not only already overfull with toughened strugglers in the *mêlée*, but it already flaunts the rank sprouting weeds of failure and is roughened by the backward footprints of defeat. And, in real fact and from a point of cold commercial valuation, the average novelist is just about as well equipped for writing sermons as for writing readable and successful dialect stories. Reader and critic alike have now been taught that spice is not all that is needed,—indeed, is not a real essential of literary dough; and the healthy mental digestion turns longingly back to plain bread, after a surfeit of caraway cake.

In any good descriptive writing, whether of fiction, character, or poetry, dialect may become not only an aid, but a certain necessity. Therein, sparingly used by the skilled hand, it may admirably shadow, or high-light, parts of a careful picture. *Hoc, sed non propter hoc.*

For precisely in this fact of power lies the danger of dialect ; to injudicious use becoming as fatal as dynamite. As appetizing as may prove the Vermouth cocktail, as capital digester as may be your crumb of Stilton, one would scarcely care to dine upon cheese, or to replace his tea and coffee with Vermouth.

And, deftly as it may be handled, dialect is always an edged tool. Its bold use doubtless produces artistic result, much as Verestchagin made his blood-gouts and torn limbs so telling in his heroic pictures. But it must be remembered that even the wildest admirers of the great Russian would reluct did even his bizarre brush paint all blood and fragmentary limb. And if in what he really did there was possible suspicion of coarseness, it was the coarseness of power and toned by contrast.

In dialect-writing there is always a suspicion of coarseness. Of necessity, it must be the expression in lower forms of speech of the thought of the lower order of mind. It must entertain the traveller in new latitudes to hear the rotund jargon of the negro, the twang of the mountaineer, or the crackle of the Creole's "gumbo talk." But it is merely the novelty of these that strikes the unaccustomed ear and tickles it in brief descent from higher modes of speech. But that is precisely what makes the return to higher verbal levels all the more grateful by contrast. For the ear quickly wearies, as the taste promptly rebels, under long continuance of jargon ; and one cares as little to carry its memory permanently, as he would to invite its utterer for his company at dinner.

So that book—and peculiarly that book of fiction—which hopes to live, as well as to thrive, must fit itself to become the companion of the better-bred classes of society and to enter the drawing-room or the boudoir. Not that this day is at all more moral than yesterday, but because it hugs the shadow closest where the substance may lack ; because its taste runs to varnish and veneer rather than to plain finish in hard woods.

It may seem singular to the unthinking or the inexperienced to state the fact, but it is no less a fact for that, that Charles Dickens could not to-day command that popular acceptance which was thrust upon him by the America of three decades gone. Further than this, it is scarcely open to doubt that no American publisher would touch his manuscripts to-day, were they new and untried, as the foundation of a popular school. And what is true of Dickens and his contemporaries is true in greater degree of his earlier compeers. Fielding, Smollett, Swift, are read scarcely at all to-day. Their bright wit does not condone a surface coarseness that is foreign to the every-day knowledge even of that reader who may revel in the semi-concealment of that "*risqué* school" of a day fast running to over-license. But, on the other hand, Dumas *fits*, in his pilfered as well as his original forms, holds his own still with mere romance-readers, who already reject Zola and even Daudet. And this is not in any sense because the taste of to-day tends greatly to the "goody-goody," when Swinburne claims the laurel and Ouida and dozens more of Indian-summer novelists wear well. It is because the coarseness of the first-named is of a class

wholly unfamiliar, while the natural bitter of its bark is not condoned by a lavish coating of society sugar. The brute strength of Zola may startle, to very verge of offence, the mental dude or dudine; but Dumas seduces them resistlessly by the deft twining of flowers about his moral bludgeon. Moreover, his knowledge of human nature and his artistic perception rely justly on that knack of leaving most to the imagination. Give the average novel-reader an inch of suggestion, and he will take an ell of impropriety.

Cold criticism differentiates their two schools justly. Dumas takes you gently by the hand, gracefully leads you to the door of the boudoir, and softly whispers, "Au revoir." Zola tramps heavily to that door, strikes it open wide, then flares up the gas.

The dialect story *per se* suggests coarseness through every strife to hold its high morality. It has horn upon its palms, grime beneath its nails, and its clothing is smirched with the soil of drudgery, or worse. As an episode this may be very well. As a main motive it wearies; and this seems to be deduced truth *in nuce*.

He must dip his pen deep into his heart and sympathy, rather than into his brain and experience, who would counsel any writer of fiction, and least of all the untried writer, "Go on; spend many months of valuable time on a dialect story. Draw carefully detailed pictures of individuals, or of a class, known only to a limited circle about you; possibly not justly comprehended even by yourself, in all those origins and mainsprings of action which concreate in their outward seeming and forms of speech. Make these *genre* portraits perfect in every detail of line and shading; send the work thus finished to some great publisher, and become rich and famous at a single bound!"

Pleasant and acceptable to the recipient such counsel doubtless is, and it surely is far easier to offer than the simpler truth. But, writing out of either inkhorn, whether of true sympathy or of practical help, he were more just and loyal who would dare to say, boldly, "Do your very best in whatever you undertake to write; but do not strive to strain Nature to fit the bent of your own taste. Do not aim at greater versatility than God gives you; but rather cling to close description of those types which you really comprehend, and which can be made, perchance, equally comprehensible to others. And, above all, draw your men and women from such models as are best known to the greatest number; and avoid, as you would infection, the attempted portraiture of too abstract characters. These are ever dangerous, even to attempts of the strong and practised hand, however simple, homely, and familiar they may appear to you. And such become only the more unnatural, and therefore the more tiresome, when clothed in unaccustomed and uncouth forms of speech."

Had some such bitter, but more wholesome, quinine of comment been more freely and more boldly administered to the infancy of recent literature, the malarial influence of imitation had not outcropped so widely into the epidemic of dialect fiction. Drastic treatment had then been less indicated, and the application of many a fierce blister of criticism, the wearing process of rebuilding and recuperation, had been spared to many a feeble system.

That there is good in dialect none may dare deny ; but that good is only when it chances, as rarely, to be good dialect ; when it is used with just discretion and made the effect of circumstances naturally arising, not the cause and origin of the circumstance itself.

Used in the former case, it may be strongly effective. In the latter it may prove largely nauseating ; damning—because it disinclines, or unfits, the reader for segregation—much of the really good work that may be done along with it.

Where the negro, the cracker, or the mountaineer dialect occurs naturally in an American story, it often gives telling effects of local color and of shading. But the negro or “cracker” story *per se* can be made bearable only by the pen of a master ; and even then it may be very doubtful if that same pen had not proved keener in portraiture, more just to human nature in the main, had the negro or the “cracker” been the mere episode, acting upon the theme idea, and itself reacted upon by that.

And as for the foreign dialects, which are ordinarily but merest caricature, and rarely rise above verbal distortions, lacking in all inspiration of foreign thought, the least written may prove best. Happily for a more forceful school of home fiction, their day is dead indeed, and the funeral has been so generally attended, the death-proofs so plainly written, and the epitaph so deeply cut, that resurrection of the late unlamented is not possible, even to scientific appliances of the clinic.

T. C. De Leon.

### OUT OF MEETING.

ONLY lately have Philadelphians begun to realize and reflect upon the disappearance of the Quakers as we knew them ; only lately has it been brought home to us that a gradual obliteration of the old uncompromising orthodoxy has set in which means the ultimate absorption of the sect. Even now, rare as is the old garb on the streets where it was such a common sight not so many years ago, the assertion that the Society is diminishing would meet with doubt and hesitation. We are so familiar with the Quaker, he is so necessary and potent a type in Philadelphia, that we would not accept the warrant even of statistics ; yet, now that the visible limit has been reached, what can we do but awake to the change ? We see few broad-brimmed hats and drab bonnets where we once saw many ; of those who wear them, the most are old and trembling. If there are young Quakers, how are we to recognize them ? Not by their dress, at any rate, except in so far as plainness of cut and sobriety of color still rule the taste of Friends, whether wealthy or in moderate circumstances : the distinctive costume is being laid aside, with many of the distinctive customs. And why ? Because the Society is losing its control over its younger members ? because its rigid rules no longer suffice to hold in check the human spirit, with its unconquerable love of freedom ? This is the common explanation, and the one desired by those who love romance and like

to think that in such cases the ultimate triumph always lies with the longing for freer, broader life, for conflict with the dangers of the world and triumph over them. It is in the contrast between the meek garb and the irrepressible human spirit which insists on marrying as love directs or fighting as patriotism bids that the poetry lies for most of us. There have been many rebels in the Society of Friends, of course, and they have always had their own way, especially the men, who if they found themselves opposed left the Society without much parley,—unless the Society compromised with them, as the Hicksites did after the war when the belligerent Quakers returned to the fold, and as the Orthodox are doing now in permitting their young men to marry proper persons not of the Society. But these have generally been isolated cases. Of those who have left the fold the great majority have never made any formal renunciation of their membership; indeed, they often speak and think of themselves as Quakers still, as if their inheritance from their sober ancestry were a social and not a religious instinct,—as, to say truth, it often seems to be. Even the young men who fling away impetuous to lead lives of stark and daring adventure—and there have been such—carry with them to the end of their lives the Quaker conscience, to say nothing of a Quaker manner which for the life of them they cannot altogether shake off.

No, it takes more than apostasy to unmake a Quaker, nor can any one generation accomplish the transformation. The experienced eye should in most cases be able to decide with entire accuracy whether it was a man's father or his grandfather that went to meeting as a boy; and with the Quaker women gradual change is the rule without exception: never is it complete until the third generation. And to my mind there is in this long, slow, hesitating physical and moral alteration a deeper and more significant poetry than in the violent wrenching away from an irksome creed. Because the Quaker belief lays hold not only of reason and faith, but somehow of man's nature; and it is not in marrying out of the Society of Friends, not in renouncing the obligations of its tenets, conforming to worldly fashions of dress, and accepting the doctrines of other religious bodies (in so far as they clash with her previous adherence), that resides the change suffered by a daughter of the Quaker stock who separates herself from it. No, there is yet to be relinquished something so deep and vital that a lifetime scarcely suffices to diminish its force; and in this diminution, whose history is written in the infinite little touches of each day of carnal and spiritual struggle, from the day when her lover first feels his heart bounding at the sight of her close bonnet and quiet, beautiful eyes, till the day when her grandchild marries in pomp and splendor in the most fashionable church in the city,—her daughter, be sure, was married quietly at home, with only the family for witnesses,—in this long irreconcilable conflict of the opposing forces both of which hold her promise lies a drama of the spirit none the less affecting for being protracted, silent, and unbetrayed.

Such a woman, to-day a grandmother, was born in Spruce Street, near Fourth, one of the soberest parts of the district occupied by old settlers. A square, two squares away, on Fourth Street, Walnut Street,

Washington Square, were the houses of the fashionable people, many of them her cousins, who still lingered about the classic precincts of the State-House; but over Spruce Street brooded a tranquillity as if the town had already chosen this quarter to lie by and grow old in gravely. Her father's house, a house of Franklin's day, was cool, dark, still, and very clean. The scant furniture was rich old mahogany, the table was set with heavy old silver; there were a few "curiosities," but no ornaments. There with her brothers and sisters she grew up in a peace and silence almost indescribable. Indeed, I do not know what words to use in describing this early training of the Quaker children, which I myself saw when a child and was close enough to to feel its spirit, though not then comprehending. The Quaker rule has been called inhuman because it proscribed innocent amusements and repressed the desire of the young for healthy expansion. All I know is that, as I saw and felt the influence of this rule, it affected the childish imagination with an infinite awe, an infinite respect, a perfect human calm. The hushed decorum of the household, the elders grave, silent, but just and kind with an unassuming but unbroken kindness, the absence of anger, ill-temper, jealousy, mockery, resentment,—and yet I have seen bursts of feeling, too, quivering with, oh, such sorrow and pain!—the spotless dress, the formal speech, the very neatness of the house furniture, preserved, quaint, spotless, unharmed, for generations,—all these things separated the childish mind from the world that is fabled to call so strongly to the caged bird; separated it, satisfied it, filled it with an awe-struck insuperable love of home. The world might stir at times an obscure thrill of curiosity, of envy, or of longing, but that the temptation could endure long if it called the adolescent away from such a home was well-nigh impossible. And not yet have I named the strongest influence that kept him there,—his Quaker mother's eyes. Whatever else the claim of the Quakeress to beauty,—and often she has no more than a healthy color and a homely pleasantness of feature,—one loveliness she rarely lacks, a broad, peaceful brow, and eyes of a still serenity that has no name. And to her child she does not speak reproof, warning, sympathy, and love, but looks them with these eyes, which speak the sorrow, the patience, and the peace of heaven itself. To offend against them is impossible.

Such a home life, then, and such a mother was our Quakeress asked to leave, in 1850 maybe, by one of her cousins in the world, a Morris, a Pemberton, or a Biddle; a youth who frequented the theatres, figured at the Assembly balls, and was a member of the City Troop, whose sisters played upon the piano, painted in water-color, and travelled to New York and Washington and Trenton for the sake of attending dances. True, with all these manifestations of a worldly spirit Hester had been familiar since she was a child, nor had ever seen harm in them—for her cousins. But herself to go live among them,—there was the ordeal she dreaded even more than that which attended the breaking of the Quaker ties. It was for herself she condemned worldliness, to herself that it was distasteful, that it seemed unrighteous. I dare say that there was in her long, silent debate, and

in the grave solemnity with which her family treated both the young people during the season which was obviously one of prayer both to her and to them, something just a little oppressive to the lover, even while it awed and strengthened him; he could hardly help longing for a touch of the cheerful certainty to which he was accustomed. It was of course his own cheerful ready confidence that gained the girl for him: boldness is such a mysterious quality to these deep-anchored souls that tug so painfully at their own unyielding moorings. But Hester settled all with her conscience at last, and with this to uphold her did not dread the announcement of her decision or the formal visit of remonstrance from the Friends' Committee. To be sure, she was a Hicksite, not Orthodox; and, what was more, the young man was of Quaker lineage. The remonstrance would not be couched, as it sometimes was, in terms unbearable. But after she was married in her father's house, amid grave and hushed witnesses who seemed bearing testimony to some strange foreordained translation of the spirit, her trial came, as she had foreseen. Resolutely she determined not to judge others, not to censure, not to stand between her husband and his family, or to diminish in any way their gay, lively intercourse. More than that, she perceived clearly enough that not the least of the dangers lay in seeming awkward beside such practised, brilliant beauties as his sisters. But on both scores she suffered. It is one thing to have entered occasionally into a world foreign to one's own, and even to have a certain comprehension of its motives; another thing to enter it forever. Consider only one convention, the license which the world accords itself, of quick, laughing, humorous raillery, in which no one is really on the defence, for there is no intentional attack; to Hester, capable though she was of a little dry, quaint humor of her own, this roguish chaff seemed little else than studied insult, and it was years before it ceased to shock her. Mercifully enough, the real malignance of social conventions, where it existed, was not apparent to her at first, and it took her a long time to appreciate even so elementary a rule as that which decrees that it is no harm to dislike your neighbor.

Or consider the ever essential and ever important question of the part she must play in the entertainments, the very worldly pomps, given by her husband's family, and the costume she must assume for that part. Her sisters-in-law could not help partly urging; she could not help hanging back; poor young things, they could scarcely be so self-controlled as to avoid exciting each other. Nor was Hester so dull as not to perceive how much it secretly concerned them that she did not buckle and set firm to the latest, most elusive code of dress as they did; simple and ungainly as the fashionable dress of the fifties appears to us now, it had its standards of elegance, as untransgressible as ever standards were; and how could so sweet, pretty, and dear a girl as Hester be allowed to fall short of them? I seem to see a picture of those eager, persuasive sisters-in-law, locked with the timid bride in an upper chamber of the Walnut Street house,—a glazed and buttery-yellow paper had that room, yellow and printed with Italian landscapes were its blinds, mahogany were its bureaus and wardrobes, dark and Byronic were the steel engravings upon its walls,—disrobing

their poor Quaker prey, and by dint of cozening speeches arraying her in a low-necked flowered silk, through which suddenly shone her trembling white sinless shoulders. And Hester looked down, and gasped, and gave a cry, and then stood quivering, tears running down her cheeks for shame. Quick, Maria! quick, Harriet! take off the Babylonish raiment, and soothe her, and promise her that no one shall ever know. . . .

Yes, to write the history of this woman's early married years, in spite of their great happiness, would be to chronicle, beside the daily springing-up of love and gratitude and the daily outflowing of thankfulness and praise, the daily implacable assaults of life upon the very fibres of the heart whose quietude then seemed the most essential to peace. And especially so as she grew older, for she began to feel stirring within her the inheritance she had not known she possessed, the gift of the "spirit;" and she had renounced it, had allied herself to those who would think a woman's testimony not only not inspired, but a breach intolerable of the most necessary social code. Ah, poor young wife, and overwhelmed, suffering soul; when the mysterious prophetic trembling came upon her, and the words almost tore her lips apart, as some trifling every-day act of her husband's, or of his father's, or of any one of his kin, seemed to her to bring a writing flashing upon the wall whose meaning she must, she must, interpret to them. "Henry, Henry, why does thee do it?" would be her silent agonized cry. Yet Henry never even suspected the struggle which by supreme effort she hid from him, and at last, exiled from her own sect, overcame; for, not exiled from her race, she preserved her calm brow before her husband and man and heaven, according to that Quaker virtue for which we have no term, but which I think deserves to be called something more than patience. For ten years this endured; and then came a release. For her babies grew into children, and somehow she began to see that conventions which were foreign to her were nature to them; and her endurance ripened; and when the war impended she had at last a flood-gate for her spirit, and in the work of abolition could uphold her testimony. Then Sumter came, and her husband went to the front; and when at last the years which were lived more acutely by the Quakers perhaps than by any other men and women were over, her spiritual crisis was past, and she was moulded to the comprehension of her part.

She had had her experience of the great waters. Her youngest child had died before Manassas; her husband was wounded at Antietam, and she pursued him and saved him and sent him back to the army; and she had lost Abraham Lincoln; and the slaves were free. Her children were well grown. Looking to them, Hester could measure how much she had broadened. Her daughter was like herself, air of grace, carriage, silent endurance, and slow reply; but her sons were active, adventurous, of scapegrace sort. Yet not only had she tolerance for their boyish exuberance, but, oh, marvellous! a certain strange pride stirred in the bottom of her heart, they were so strong and so goodly to look upon. And when they lovingly made a sport of her to her face, behold, it was pleasant.

Next followed the years when she began to confess that they were their father's; but her daughter was her own. The boys might have come into the family in any generation: it was the girl who reproduced her mother, changed by a new birth and a new youth. Like Hester, she betrayed her demure, quiet humor only at home; unlike Hester, she had address, and the poise of a woman from the world. The mother had natural dignity, the daughter natural ease. In the younger woman the elder's simplicity broadened into accurate and delicate taste; the girl dressed soberly, but with instinctive elegance, and could criticise where her mother could only approve. Yet she did not care for display, was disturbed rather than entertained by that immemorial plaything, a lover, and was sometimes thought a simpleton. It required still another generation to complete the change.

To-day there is a rule in force in Hester's family, a rule that has stood for many years: her children and grandchildren must take tea with her on Sunday evening. Who does not know those Quaker Sunday evening teas, whose plenty belies their simplicity, and whose plainness makes a marketing worthy of Savarin? At that crowded table contrast two figures, the grandmother and her eldest granddaughter. The one sits erect and slight, her thin hands emerging but rarely, with a stiff impressive slowness, from the ambush of her gray shawl, to touch fork or teaspoon. Her hair, still dark, is drawn flat on her temples; her cheeks are hollow, her lips are patient and still, and her brow is smooth, but a line of suffering refines her mouth. Her eyes rest on her brood with a look at once that of a mother and that of a law-giver. When she speaks it is in a low voice; she says "thee" to all; is it that one word which still gives her the indefinable, indescribable air of personal humility, of homely simplicity, which is so strangely blended with her attitude of authority and judgment?

Beside her, from time to time, touching gray shawl, or mouth, or shrunken fingers with her own lovely hands, sits another Hester. Hers is the imperious radiance of dazzling youth; her golden brown head, her blue eyes, her fair skin, all shine as if they were imperishable. Her sleeves, the *jabot* at her white neck, are exquisitely personal to her, and yet are more fashionable than the fashion; when she puts her hand to her trim waist, almost spanning it, it produces an extraordinary impression of a bird preparing for flight, just on the rise. She poises her head; she curves her lip into a smile; her eye roves for adventure; she flirts openly, shamelessly, with her uncles, her cousins, her very grandmother. What a creature of wit, humor, simplicity, fashion, roguery, magnificence, and love! At nineteen years, what a menace to mortal peace of mind! The whole table follows, applauds, adores her; and this, if you please, is child's play. She is at home now, and doesn't need to exert herself. When she goes to the Assembly she has twenty, thirty bouquets (which she leaves at home) and the men crowd round her ten at a time.

And she and her grandmother understand each other better than anybody else in the world.

Thomas Wharton.

## BANQUETS OF THE OLDEN TIME.

**B**ANQUETS of the present day, even the most sumptuous, are but mean affairs compared to those of antiquity. The diner-out used to the opulence of the latter Egyptian Empire, the *bon-vivant* accustomed to the splendor of Greece or the luxury of Rome, expected much of their entertainers, and usually they were not disappointed.

Vast was the magnificence of a feast given by some great nobleman during the rule of the Pharaohs. The guests, both men and women, came at midday, some in chariots, some in palanquins, and a few—doubtless those who lived near by—on foot. They were met at the doorway by slaves, and conducted to an anteroom, where their hands and feet were washed with perfumed water held in golden vessels, and their heads anointed with scented pomatum in sign of welcome.

Strong perfumes were much affected by the Egyptians. In European museums one may see little alabaster boxes, frequently of exquisite workmanship, containing samples of their unguents, still fragrant, although made two or three thousand years ago.

Ablutions ended, the guests were crowned with lotos-flowers, while chaplets of the same fragrant blossoms were hung about their necks and a single bud was given them to hold in the hand. They were then ready to pay their respects to their host and hostess, whom they found seated side by side on a large *fauteuil* in the reception-room, exchanging ceremonious greetings with their visitors.

Wine was passed about, and with it chopped-up cabbage, supposed to have the double merit of preventing drunkenness and of stimulating thirst. Conversation became general, and could not have differed very materially from that of the present day. The men talked of the latest military operations or discussed the merits of their dogs and horses, while the ladies compared the workmanship of their several jewellers and strove to outdo each other by a display of gold and silver trinkets. Very likely, too, they criticised each other's head-dresses, for Egyptian women were very proud of their hair and wore elaborate coiffures loaded with gems and ornamental fabrics.

The banquet was not prepared until the guests had put in their appearance; and, in order that the long wait before dinner might not become tedious, a regular vaudeville entertainment was performed for their benefit. Musicians with harp, tambourine, pipes, and flute furnished tuneful accompaniment to the voluptuous movements of lithe-limbed dancing-girls, who, clad in diaphanous loose-flowing dresses reaching to the ankles, pirouetted, turned, and posed much after the fashion of a modern ballet. There were grotesque dances, too, in which the performer, attired in antic dress, juggled with cymbals or jumped through hoops of swords, keeping step all the while to the music. Acrobats added to the general amusement by displaying feats of strength or agility, while female contortionists tied themselves into human knots for the edification of the company.

While the guests were thus diverted, an army of cooks was preparing the feast. Oxen, kids, gazelles, wild goats, geese, and various small birds must be slaughtered, dressed, and made ready for table. Egyptian cooks had not developed the science of cookery to the degree it reached under Grecian civilization, but they were thorough believers in giving their clients full measure in quantity. Meats were either boiled or roasted, and the higher culinary knowledge was expended chiefly on the fabrication of sweetmeats.

Vegetables in endless variety formed an important part of the bill of fare, and had to be cooked in various ways, while the bakers were kept busy baking buns in fancy shapes, filling the dough in some instances with caraway-seeds, like the Vienna rolls of the nineteenth century.

When all was ready, the guests assembled in the banqueting-hall, a lofty apartment with highly colored walls and slender pillars supporting a sky-blue ceiling in which glittered golden stars. In the middle stood either long tables or groups of small tables each accommodating three or four persons, while the wine-jars, gayly decked with flowers, were ranged in rows against the wall. The grape grew ripe, luscious, and to enormous size in the land of the Pharaohs, and wine-making was an important industry. Wine was used for sacerdotal as well as convivial purposes, and, while king and priest were prohibited from too free indulgence in the flowing bowl, all others drank to their hearts' content.

Sometimes men and women sat together in festive gatherings, sometimes the sexes were separated, but each received equal attention. A slave stationed behind each guest was ready to obey the least command, and time passed quickly in feasting and merrymaking. As the wine circulated, women as well as men were drawn into the whirl of dissipation, and furnished subjects for the merciless pencil of the caricaturist. The proof still exists pictorially that the fair sex of that time and country drank more than was good for them, while their lords and masters had frequently to be carried home from a festive gathering limp as the faded lotos-blossoms resting on their fevered brows.

A strange custom was in vogue: in the midst of the feasting, when the senses seemed almost satiated, a slave appeared bearing a small figure of a mummy, which he exhibited portentously to the revellers, saying, "Gaze here; drink and be merry, for when you die such will you be."

Greeks and Romans, after an heroic age when men were abstemious and temperate, reached a pitch of luxury when their pampered appetites demanded the most extravagant indulgences. Fortunes were squandered on the table; the confines of the known world were ransacked in search of fresh delicacies, and the imagination was racked to discover new dishes to delight the jaded palate.

The number of guests at a fashionable banquet was regulated by custom,—not more than the Muses nor less than the Graces, ran the canon of classic good form,—and either nine or three reclined at the table of a host during the rule of the Cæsars. The couches each

accommodated three persons, and stood in a semicircle about a small round table, removed with every course.

Bills of fare were given the guests with lists of dishes which would fill a modern gourmand with dismay. They ate the most extraordinary things. Varro, writing in the time of Julius Cæsar, gives direction for fattening rats for the table, and the classic *menu* included cacti, thistles, sharks' flesh, cuttle-fish, sea-nettles, and a vast array of substances the names of which look more in place in a pharmacopœia than in a cook-book.

Their cooks must have been learned beyond those of the present day to make such things tasty, and, indeed, some of the exploits of these gentry seem well-nigh fabulous. There was he, for example, who served a whole pig, boiled on one side and roasted on the other, stuffed with an olio of thrushes, mincemeat, slices of the matrices of a sow, the yolks of eggs, and various spices. In this masterpiece it was impossible to see how the animal had been killed or where the knife had separated its body. Another cook prepared a turnip so skilfully for his royal master that the latter swore it was a delicious anchovy, a fish he was longing for at that moment.

Even the emperors puzzled their brains to discover new viands: Caligula invented many, while Vitellius, a notorious glutton, devised "The Shield of Minerva," a wonderful *pièce de résistance*, in which there were tossed up together the livers of charfish, the brains of pheasants and peacocks, the tongues of flamingoes, and the entrails of lampreys. It was the former ruler who—as Cleopatra is said to have done—drank pearls of great value dissolved in vinegar.

The modern gourmand might find the wines of the ancients as little palatable as their eatables. Many of them were mixed with such things as sea-water, resin, salt, pitch, and aromatic herbs, and—having been exposed in smoky garrets until reduced to a syrup—required straining and the generous admixture of water to make them potable.

But, though ancient wines might not appeal to modern taste, the vessels from which they were quaffed still excite æsthetic admiration. Upon them the Greek or the Roman artist expended all his skill in ornamental design. Some he fashioned in the semblance of animals' heads, others he made horn-shaped, and others again he modelled in the form of the modern *épergne*, adorning the bowls with figure compositions.

Among the most expensive cups were those made of murrhine,—probably an opaline stone variegated with delicate colors. Pliny mentions two, one of which sold for seventy thousand sesteria, equal to about three thousand five hundred dollars, while the other was bought for three hundred thousand sesteria, or approximately fifteen thousand dollars. Nero paid a million sesteria, or fifty thousand dollars, for a murrhine cup with a handle. Vessels of precious stone were also in use, and in the time of Augustus both Greeks and Romans had glassware blown with a skill surpassing that of the celebrated Venetian glass-makers of the sixteenth century.

Table appliances, couches, and banqueting-halls were equally mag-

nificent. In Nero's "Golden House" on the Palatine Hill the supper-rooms had compartments in the ceiling, inlaid with ivory, which, revolving, scattered flowers and unguents upon the revellers below. The ceiling of the chief banqueting-room was painted with stars, and turned perpetually in imitation of the celestial bodies. Lucullus, in his villa at Naples and his country-seat at Tusculum, surrounded himself with every conceivable luxury, lavishly spending the wealth he had gained in warfare. "His daily entertainments were ostentatiously extravagant," Plutarch tells us, "not only with purple coverlets, and plate adorned with precious stones, and dancing and interludes, but with the greatest diversity of dishes and most elaborate cookery." On an impromptu dinner, given to Cicero and Pompey, Lucullus expended fifty thousand drachmas, or about seven thousand dollars.

Garlands of flowers, costly perfumes, and unguents were lavished upon the diners, who frequently received valuable souvenirs of the banquet in the form of rich gifts. At one of Cleopatra's dinners, given to Antony and his associates, the room was carpeted a cubit deep with rose-blossoms.

Drinking was heavy at these classic feasts. Between the courses the guests lost large sums on the dice, or were entertained by singing and dancing. Combats of gladiators were sometimes introduced, and Caligula frequently had persons tortured or killed before him while he was drinking or carousing.

Wealth bred monster epicures. There were Pithylus, who wrapped up his tongue when not using it, and cleaned it with a fish-skin before eating; Apicius, who spent myriads of drachmas on his stomach, and invented a particular cheese-cake; and hundreds of others equally extravagant. It was Apicius who voyaged to Africa for the express purpose of eating larger crawfish than he could find at home in Campania. The African crawfish were large, but did not come up to his expectations, so the disappointed epicure sailed for home as fast as the wind would carry him.

Among the heathen Teutonic races, as with many of the Asiatic barbaric nations, sacrifice, in frequent instances, meant simply an enormous ceremonial banquet to which the god was invited as guest of honor. Edible animals only were killed,—it was considered unbecoming to offer food to the deity which the sacrificer himself would decline,—and after the choicest morsels, such as the head, heart, and liver, had been consecrated, the pious congregation fell to with a will and despatched the rest of the feast. The victim's flesh was boiled in huge sacrificial caldrons: sometimes similar vessels contained gallons of ale, which was also offered to the favored god. The horse was a favorite animal for sacrifice, and its flesh was universally eaten by the ancient Germanic tribes. It was only when Christianity had been adopted that such meat came to be considered unfit for food. Probably much of the prejudice against its use to-day for this purpose is due to the zealous teachings of the early Christian missionaries, who looked upon horse-eaters as benighted pagans and upon horseflesh as meat for the devil.

Private banquets preserved some of the ceremonies customary to \*

the sacred feasts. Thus part of the food was set aside for the household gods, and beer spilt purposely on the ground for their benefit. Frequent mention is made in the Icelandic sagas of excessive feasting, and truly heroic drinking-bouts were fashionable. The food was plain but plentiful: the banqueting-room was made beautiful with tapestries and spoils captured from Southern lands. Beer, mead, or wine was drunk from earthen bowls, wooden pitchers, or animals' horns. Sometimes a more gruesome tankard was passed about the board: the skulls of fallen enemies, bleached and polished until white as snow and smooth as ivory, were mounted as cups in settings of precious metals inlaid with jewels. So it happened that the head of one who sat at the banquet-table on Monday evening might deck the same festive board on Tuesday as a drinking-vessel. Skull cups were so common that in some of the Northern languages skull and cup were synonymous words.

The use of these horrible utensils sometimes gave rise to serious trouble. Alboin, King of the Langobards, had a beautiful one made from the brain-cap of Kunemund, chief of the Gepidæ. Not content with slaying his enemy, Alboin insisted on marrying Rosamund, the daughter of his ancient foeman. She made him a good enough wife, as wives went in those days, but she never forgave the slaughter of her father. One night, Alboin—he must have been drunker than usual—commanded her to pledge him from her dead father's skull. She obeyed, but forthwith fostered a conspiracy against her husband's life, and, after carrying it to a successful conclusion, married a fellow-conspirator.

Minni-drinking was common to all Teutonic races, the goblet being regularly emptied to the memory of the absent or deceased person whose name was mentioned to the assembly. At grand sacrifices and banquets the god's minni was drunk, and when Christianity supplanted heathenism the names of saints were substituted for those of the pagan divinities.

Free fights were frequent terminations to these barbaric feasts: when the guests did not become quarrelsome over their cups, they sometimes resorted to combats as mere after-dinner pastime. There was the handkerchief game,—a kind of company duel,—in which two adversaries, without the slightest ill will, endangered their lives to amuse their fellows. The combatants began their pleasing sport by swearing by the rims of their bucklers, by the shoulders of their horses, and by the points of their swords, that they cherished no animosity against each other. Each seized with his left hand the end of a handkerchief and with his right a sharp knife. The handkerchief kept them near enough together to make the fighting interesting, and the encounter frequently ended with the death of one or both of the gamesters.

This must have been almost as great a sport as the hanging game practised by the Thracians. This pastime consisted in hanging one of their number—chosen by lot—to a convenient tree or beam. He was given a sickle with which to cut himself down, but unless he was very quick in his movements he strangled to death, and the company enjoyed a laugh at his expense.

Many English banquet customs are survivals from ancient times or mark some special phase of history. Pledging, for example, is said to have become the custom after the Danish conquest. Those ferocious invaders thought it a pleasant jest to cut the throat of any native who temptingly exposed his jugular by drinking in their presence. Naturally the conquered people became extremely wary, and refused to drink in public unless one of the company stood pledge and guarded them with drawn weapon.

The drinking of healths was common to Greeks and Romans; the loving-cup is a relic of classic custom; huge ribs of beef were peculiarly affected by the Germans, and numbers of the dishes of the present day date their origin from the olden times. So the student of ancient history or archaic manners may read the annals of a conquest in a bill of fare, or recall the trials of a nation by its table customs.

*Francis J. Ziegler.*

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### A BRAZILIAN ADVENTURE.

SOME years ago, while hunting in the province of Amassonas, in northwestern Brazil, our party encamped one evening near a long, narrow marsh, bordering the south side of the Rio Negro; and here we met with a rather startling experience.

After hopping and turning out our four pack-mules, we pitched our big tent, prepared and ate supper, smoked our pipes, and told stories till bedtime. Then we lay down, each man on his own canvas stretcher, to sleep, if possible. But not a breath of wind was stirring; the surface of the great river was smooth as a mirror, and the night was so oppressively hot and sultry that none of us could obtain a moment's rest.

While we lay, wide awake, feverishly tossing and gasping for a mouthful of fresh air, Tom Bently, the youngest and most alert member of the party, suddenly raised a chorus of laughing incredulity by declaring he heard the cry of a child.

"Guess you're getting homesick, Tom," said Frank Johnson. "Probably there's not a human being within ten miles of us; and even your sharp ears can't hear a baby's voice quite so far as that."

"I did hear it, all the same," stoutly rejoined Bently. "Listen now, all of you."

Resolutely suppressing our merriment, and scarcely venturing to breathe, we remained for some minutes silent as the stars above us. Then another man asserted that he, too, could hear a faint, far-away moaning like that of a distressed infant; and at last all but two of us admitted that such a sound was really audible. But what could it be? It appeared to come from the swamp, but certainly was not the cry of any reed-haunting bird, beast, or reptile. It was too unmistakably human for that; yet the idea that it could possibly be the wailing of a child seemed too ridiculous to entertain.

Sometimes the sound ceased for a minute or two, dying away in

gurgling sobs; then again it would float tremulously through the still air with a pitiful cadence that drove us well-nigh crazy.

"I can't stand this," exclaimed Bently. "Unless the foul fiend is trying to lure us to destruction, that cry comes from the mouth of an abandoned child; and, fiend or no fiend, I'm going to investigate."

"We'll all go, Tom," said one and another, and, lighting our two lanterns, the whole six of us armed ourselves, took a couple of axes and a coil of rope, and set out in the direction whence the cries seemed to come.

Though there was not a cloud in the sky, the stars had become invisible, a dense fog having risen, rendering it impossible to see five feet beyond the lantern's rays. These, however, enabled us to keep close to the edge of the marsh, and we went cautiously on until the intermittent sounds seemed to proceed from a spot directly opposite us and not more than fifty yards away.

There was no longer any difference of opinion among us. Every man was now fully convinced that the cries were indeed those of a babe, and this removal of the last lingering doubt nearly distracted us. But how reach the little sufferer? It was obviously impossible to traverse the swamp; one step into its oozy edge conclusively proved that.

We shouted words of encouragement, thinking that possibly the child was old enough to speak; but the only answer was a redoubled crying.

"My God!" exclaimed one of us, "must that baby perish almost within touch of our hands?"

"It shall not perish while we live," replied the veteran hunter, Rob Tisdale. "Here, boys, four of you go with one lantern and hunt up such pieces of dry timber as you can carry, while Tom and I will remain here with the other light and form the stuff into a raft big enough to carry us all. Get four stout green poles, too, and we'll push the float through the reeds by main strength, and thus, I hope, reach the child in time to save it."

Rob's suggestion was heartily approved, and we set to work like beavers to carry it out. As fast as we four brought the dry wood, our two comrades chopped it into suitable lengths and arranged these, criss-cross fashion, in the edge of the morass, bringing the forward end of the rude raft to a wedge-like point, so as to facilitate its passage through the weeds. Then the outside pieces were lashed across from one side to the other, to prevent spreading.

We had made all possible haste, but it was no easy task to look up proper material by the light of a single lantern, and by the time the raft was finished day was breaking.

We pushed off then, and found that, although the thing would barely have borne three men in open water, it floated high and dry on the swamp's sedgy surface with our little crowd of six.

By the aid of the four poles at the sides and stern and of two men pulling it along from the bow by grasping the strong rushes, we managed to keep the clumsy affair moving riverward. But the bottom of the marsh was so soft that in withdrawing our poles from

the mud we lost nearly as much distance as was gained by every forward push.

Meantime those piteous cries were becoming weaker and weaker; evidently they must soon be hushed in the silence of death; and, oh, our progress was so slow!

"Work, boys, work like tigers!" implored Tisdale, clutching clump after clump of reeds in his desperate efforts to draw the craft along.

And we did work,—worked as men can do only when a human life is at stake. Yet, despite our frantic exertions, we had not in twenty minutes made twice that number of yards from shore.

So far, we could see no signs of the imperilled child, but after ten minutes more of maddening labor we burst through a particularly dense patch of weeds, and found, close to the margin of the river, where it was caught by the protruding branch of a sunken tree, a large dug-out wherein, on an outstretched puma-skin, lay a half-breed boy baby, naked as the day he was born, and apparently about nine months old.

Evidently the canoe had drifted to its present position from farther up, or perhaps from the other side of the river, many hours before, as the child, though not much emaciated, was gaunt and hollow-eyed from hunger and could not have lived through another half-day.

On seeing us, the little fellow threw up his brown arms with a cry so piteously appealing that Rob Tisdale caught him for a moment to his own broad breast and fervently exclaimed, "Thank God, we came in time!"

But not quite yet did we know that we had saved the little waif from a death infinitely more horrible, though perhaps more merciful, than one by starvation. Yet so it was. Had we been three minutes later coming to the rescue, we should have found only an empty canoe, and no human being would ever have known the lost child's fate.

For possibly a half-minute after our find we stood, some in the canoe, some on the raft, quietly discussing our next move, when Harry Ratcliffe whispered, "Merciful heavens, boys, look there!" pointing to a strange, wave-like motion among the reeds. "Don't speak nor move."

Then we saw, not fifteen yards away, and coming with a gentle, sinuous movement toward us, an enormous anaconda (called in Brazil "the great water-serpent"), which did not seem to regard us at all, but, probably attracted by the child's cries, came fearlessly on with a purpose so evident as to suggest to more than one of us the dreadful thought that the hideous reptile was not for the first time seeking human prey. True, the anaconda, unlike the tree boa, does not habitually attack land animals, but in that tropical climate little children are continually sporting in the ponds and rivers, where, in common with the equally dangerous alligator, this serpent makes its home.

A most fortunate thing it was for us now that Tisdale had insisted upon placing our fire-arms on the raft instead of leaving them on shore. "One never knows," he had said, "what's going to turn up in a place like this. It's always best to be on the safe side."

Never pausing in its onward course, the great snake had in a few

seconds got within three yards of the boat. Then it raised its head about five feet out of water, arched its neck, and actually peered into the canoe, as if to make sure of the exact position of the baby, into whose tender flesh its recurved fangs would next moment have been fixed; but that dart was never made.

Tom Bently had softly picked up his double-barrelled shot-loaded gun, and, just as the serpent was about to strike, he fired both charges at its flat head, shattering that and part of its neck to atoms. Thereupon the upraised portion of the body sank down, and, after a few convulsive struggles, the monster lay dead among the half-concealing weeds, while we gave Tom a round of hearty cheers.

But there was no time to lose. The half-famished babe must be fed as soon as possible. So, as the quickest way of reaching camp, we all got into the canoe and paddled it ashore in one-quarter of the time consumed in bringing out the raft.

On arriving at the tent, Rob Tisdale, who would let no one else carry the rescued child, opened and diluted a can of condensed milk, and, at first drop by drop, fed some of it to the little one, who presently fell asleep and did not awake for several hours. Then, at short intervals, it was given a more generous portion of the milk, and before night was as lively as any baby could be, much to the delight of its six anxious attendants.

Meantime three of us had gone out again in the canoe, taken the rope from the raft, and towed to shore the anaconda, which, on careful measurement, we found to be, taking no account of the lost head and neck, twenty-three feet and seven inches long,—a creature quite capable, while in life, of swallowing a full-grown man.

Like most hunters, several of us could sew tolerably well, so we quickly provided a sufficient supply of clothing for our little foundling, who soon became a perfect picture of rosy health and a joy to all of us.

Although secretly hoping, I fear, that no one would reclaim the child, we felt in duty bound to remain where we were for two weeks, so that if searchers were abroad on the river they might see the smoke of our fire and thus be led to visit us.

But no one ever came, and we finally moved a day's journey farther up stream, meeting on the way only two half-breeds, to whom Tisdale, who spoke Portuguese and several Indian languages, told the strange story of the baby's rescue.

These men, however, could give us no information. They had not heard of any one losing a child. In fact, they said, such losses, by wild beasts, serpents, and other causes, were too common among the natives to excite more than a passing remark.

We had been for two days settled in our new camp, made this time on a piece of rising ground commanding a full view of the river, here not quite a mile wide, when, on the third morning, there came across the stream a wan-looking Portuguese woman and her Indian husband, offering chickens, eggs, and milk for sale.

These were the first persons we had seen since pitching camp, and, after concluding a trade, Tisdale led the woman into the tent, and,

without any explanation, showed her the child, just then sleeping on the puma-skin we had found in the canoe.

No sooner had the forlorn creature caught sight of the infant than she uttered a wild shriek and fell senseless to the floor. At one glance she had recognized her child.

Hearing his wife's cry, the man now rushed in, and he, too, instantly knew the little boy to be his own.

For a brief space we all stood in amazed silence, but Tisdale, always equal to any emergency, soon succeeded in restoring the woman to consciousness, whereupon he very wisely placed the now awake and smiling babe in her arms.

Then ensued a pathetic scene. All in a moment the mother's dull, aching despair had given place to joy, and, as she rapturously pressed her recovered darling to her heart, a flood of happy tears swept away the last vestige of her sometime grief.

When, by and by, the story of the rescue was told, father and mother threw themselves at our feet, invoking for us every heavenly blessing, and passionately calling upon all the saints to reward us.

We then learned that, in the forenoon of the day before we discovered the child, the woman had been out on the river, fishing; that on going to her hut to prepare dinner she had left the baby asleep in the canoe, and that when she came back, in an hour or so, both boat and child had disappeared. The husband, being out hunting at the time, could not be at once summoned, and when he did come home, two more precious hours were spent in securing another canoe.

Then, for the remainder of that evening and during the next two days, the distracted parents had searched the river for miles, and must have passed our abandoned raft and our camp several times, but without noticing either.

They gave up all hope then, concluding that a roving band of wild Indians had stolen the canoe and babe.

When at last our visitors left for home, one could scarcely have known them as the same woebegone beings who had so shortly before come to us, for both now looked as bright, cheerful, and happy as if neither had ever known a moment's sorrow.

*William Thomson.*

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### LOVE'S SADDEST POSSIBILITY.

TWO spirits met in Shadow Land,  
Two spirits late released from life.  
Each looked at each with stranger eyes;  
Each turned from each to alien skies;  
Neither looked back nor waved a hand;  
Neither recalled the other's face;  
And yet on earth in earthly days  
They named each other "Husband," "Wife."

*Susie M. Best.*

## ODDITIES OF A FAMOUS CLIMATE.

THE world has heard strange stories of California since its discovery as a gold-producing country fifty years ago. The early pioneers brought back to their homes tales of the far-off Golden State that were almost incredible; so much so, indeed, that the return of a gold-seeker came to be greeted with an anticipatory smile, as if to say, "Well, what extraordinary yarn have *you* got to tell us?" Few believed these strange stories, and even to this day a measure of incredulity greets the simple recital of the "Truthful James" of the land of gold and oranges. So thoroughly has this scepticism been engrafted upon many people that the early Californian earned the undeserved distinction of being the Gascon of America.

And yet his stories were true, as a rule. The fact is, the climatic conditions of California are so utterly different from those of the Eastern States and Europe that it is not surprising that they cause wonder and disbelief.

There is the longitudinal isotherm, for instance. If you will look at the map of California so as to fix the description in your head, a remarkable climatic freak will be shown you. To premise, it is a general law the world over that the farther north of the equator one goes the colder it gets. Now the audacious climate of California deliberately breaks this law. Look at your map. From San Diego County in the extreme south of this immense State to Tehama County in the extreme north is a distance of nine hundred miles; yet, strange to say, there is no difference of any consequence between the mean temperature of San Diego on the Mexican border, and that of Tehama, a few miles south of the Oregon line. The only difference between the two extremes is that there is much more rain during the rainy season in the north than in the south. The thermometer marks the same degree of heat during the summer, and spring begins and summer ends at the same time. And yet San Diego is on the thirty-third parallel of latitude, and Tehama on the fortieth. Were the same conditions prevalent on the Atlantic coast, there would be no perceptible difference between the climates of New Hampshire and Florida, except that the north would show a more abundant rainfall during the wet season.

It is the Japan Current that causes this phenomenon. This current, starting from the Japan Sea, makes its way in a parabola across the Pacific Ocean to the shores of British America, where it is deflected, and follows the coast-line of the continent down to about Santa Barbara in California, where it bids good-by to America and flows off seaward again. It is a warm current, and corresponds to the Gulf Stream of the Atlantic coast. During the summer months this warm current, encountering the cooler atmosphere of the western shore-line of America, creates heavy fogs, which prevail along the entire coast of California from May to September. They are elevated fogs, resembling lowering clouds, and appear late in the afternoon or evening,

and disappear the following morning, any time from sunrise to the middle of the forenoon. Charged with ocean salt, they are the salvation of California; for, if they did not prevail, the Pacific coast of the United States would be a fiery furnace, as hot as Persia and uninhabitable by the Anglo-Saxon race. They are more or less dense along the immediate coast, diminish as they proceed inland, and disappear altogether a hundred miles away from the sea. When strangers to the coast see this fog of a summer's morning they take their umbrellas in expectation of a downpour; yet it is nothing but the regular high fog, and rain is practically unknown in California during the six long months of beautiful summer.

About once a month during the summer an area of high barometrical pressure develops over Nevada, and when the barometer rises to 30.20 at Winnemucca, in the northern portion of that State, the mischief is to pay in California. This area of high pressure interposes itself as a high wall in front of the regular afternoon sea-breeze or trade-wind that keeps California cool during the long summer days, and the wind at once ceases. Now get out your straw hat and thin suit, for it is going to be hot. As soon as the sea-breeze ceases, the daily high fog disappears with it, and the thermometer goes up along with the barometer. A temperature of 100° is nothing. When it gets to 110° folks in the interior begin to remark that it is warm; at 112° it is hot; at 115° there is a general tendency to keep in-doors; and when the mercury crawls up to 120° and begins to perspire, if there is anything hotter in the sky than the California sun it has never been discovered. These heated terms generally last from two or three days to a week; then the Nevada barometer relents, begins to fall, and the area of high pressure moves eastward; the bars having been let down, the sea-breeze again blows in from the ocean, the welcome fog reappears, and California folks breathe again.

The explanation given by the Weather Bureau is this. The area of high pressure over Nevada, by checking the sea-breeze, opens the whole territory of California, one thousand miles long by two hundred wide, to an influx of hot air from the Modoc lava-beds in the northern part of the State, where the celebrated Modoc massacre occurred twenty-five years ago. This hot air flows down south along the edge of the Nevada high-pressure wall, as a stream flows along the side of a bluff, and covers the whole State. Then it is hot: at Yuma (celebrated by Mark Twain's pointed anecdote of the blanket) a temperature of 130° is not uncommon.

This heat seems incredible, and the Easterner at once imagines scenes of consequent suffering; but a temperature of 110° in California is not as uncomfortable as one of 96° in the other parts of the United States. This is owing to the extreme dryness of the atmosphere, for it is not dry heat but moist heat that prostrates. When Chicago and New York are gasping for breath at a temperature of 96° and the poorer classes are possibly sinking under the excessive heat, the Californian is going about his business as usual with the thermometer up to 110°.

The dryness of the California climate is illustrated by the preserva-

tion of fresh meat in the hottest weather. In the central and southern parts of the State, away from the coast, the ranchers, on killing a sheep, never think of putting it on ice. They wrap it in a sack to protect it from the flies and hang it up in the sun, generally against the side of the house. The thermometer may be standing at  $112^{\circ}$  at the time, but the mutton does not spoil. On the contrary, it improves under the exposure. A crust forms on the outside, keeping the juices in a state of complete preservation for a week or ten days. The rancher cuts off chops and cutlets until the carcass is exhausted; and the last cuts are better than the first. And such mutton!

Another peculiar feature of the California climate is its hot north winds. Happily, they are rare. They are fiery blasts from the Modoc lava-beds mentioned above, and their effect is pronounced. After one of these hot northers has been blowing a few hours, everything is as dry as a chip. If you attempt to write, the leaves of your paper curl up at the corners; your fingers get so dry and smooth that you can hardly turn the pages without the aid of moisture from your tongue, and even this organ is parched and possibly feverish. Your lips, too, are dry and febrile. Everybody is complaining. Some have headaches, others pains in their bones, others hot and feverish skins, still others inflamed eyes, and so on. As for vegetation, it simply wilts. A hot norther will cut down the grain-crop of California millions of bushels in two or three days, and prevent the proper maturing of all sorts of fruit. Some persons are so sensitive to these northers that they can feel their approach several days in advance, and such unfortunates really suffer while the north wind is on. Indeed, the California norther is a mild form of the sirocco of the desert of Sahara, which does all the mischief it can in Africa and then sweeps across the Mediterranean to worry the Italians for a few days.

When the Californian tells you that he has seen the wind blow so hard that it blew the grass out of the ground, you will smile in spite of yourself, it is so perfectly ridiculous. And yet it is true. I once planted a lawn in March, sowing Kentucky blue-grass. It came up beautifully and flourished until May, which is the month in which the norther is prevalent. I think it was the middle of the month, and the grass was about three inches high, when the norther came along. In two days I had no more lawn: the grass had been blown out of the ground. As previously mentioned, the norther is a desiccating wind, and it dried the loose soil about the grass-roots until it was reduced to a powder and thus unable to resist the wind, which dispersed it. The roots, having no further hold in the ground, gave way, and the wind carried off the grass. This is how the wind blew the grass out of the ground. It is a California yarn, but simple enough when explained.

Sometimes there are several of these northers during the year: again several years elapse without any. They are miserable members of the climatic family, anyhow.

Another curious feature of the California climate is that it is different about every mile. I suppose that there are as many variations of climate as there are square miles. There is a Munchausen flavor about this statement, too, but it is a fact, nevertheless. Your neighbor a

mile away lives in a climate as different from yours as an apple is from a pumpkin. It is purely a question of the wind, the fog, the elevation, the humidity, the shelter. The climate on the west side of a hill in the coast region is apt to be bleak, owing to its exposure to the raw ocean breeze, while the east side is warm and soft. This explains the phenomenon so often observed by tourists, of the California hills being wooded on the east side and bare on the west. The latter exposure is kept chilled by the cold sea-breeze, which blows a half-gale along the coast during the summer. It is this same trade-wind that causes the trees to lean over to the east in many parts of the State. Down in the great Salinas Valley, for instance, all the live-oak trees that dot the landscape lean to the east and south because of these winds, which are fiercer there than elsewhere. Indeed, one rarely sees an erect tree in this valley.

Another peculiar feature that puzzles the tourist is the apparent reversal of the seasons. He is astonished to find that the landscape is green in winter and sere in summer. This is because the winter and spring rains keep the grass green in those seasons; but towards the latter part of May the rains cease, and the hot sun very soon bleaches the landscape to the tawny hue of a tiger-skin. Still another odd thing is that when the grass is thus bleached it is not dead, but dried into natural hay, and in this state makes the very best feed for live stock,—unlike the grasses of the East, which when dry in the fall are dead and devoid of nutriment.

It will surprise most people to learn that the earliest fruits ripen not in the southern but in the northern part of the State. The early apricots and peaches come from the Vaca Valley, fifty miles north of San Francisco. Yet almost adjoining this valley, and on the same parallel of latitude, are two of the latest fruit districts of the State,—another illustration of the spotted character of the climate. The earliest oranges come from Butte County, away up in the northern part of the State, and seven hundred miles north of Los Angeles, the first figs come from San Bernardino, seven hundred miles south of the region that produces the first oranges, and the first grapes come from Fresno, exactly half-way between the two. This paradox is positively confusing to anybody except a Californian.

You plant an orange-tree on the east side of your house, and it bears abundant crops of the golden fruit; plant another orange-tree on the west side, where the sea-breeze strikes it, and you will hardly get an orange. It is the same with flowers. The climate of your orchard is different from that of your vegetable garden, and the climate of the latter in turn is different from that of your flower-beds. Wherever one goes in this wonderful State he finds a different climate. The variation may be slight, but it exists nevertheless. On the coast it is moist and cool; in the interior valleys it is dry and hot; but this is the only general distinction that can be applied to the whole State. Indeed, an orchardist has a fine prune orchard, which nets him handsome returns every year: so he plants another prune orchard close by, and makes a failure, because the climates of the two orchards are different, though they are only a few hundred yards apart.

It is a queer country where one has half a dozen different climates in his back yard, so to say. And the joke of it is, one is always discovering others. In fact, the farmer and fruit-grower are obliged to make a special study of their individual climatic conditions to obtain the best results. In the cultivation of flowers the peculiarity is even more marked.

Still, the California climate is far superior to the average, taking the world over, and life is about as easy and pleasant in the Golden State as it is anywhere else on this terrestrial ball.

Frederick H. Dewey.

### VEGETABLES.\*

IN the course of vegetables and plants and plant-products there are such variety and abundance that one is inclined to wonder how in so various a world it ever happens that any man should go hungry. As to the common edible plants of the garden, most of them have been known to men for long ages; but there are many wild plants that if subjected to cultivation will prove valuable. It is one of the most interesting and promising fields for investigation by the numerous experimental stations now at work in all the States of the Union.

Among the familiar vegetables, one highly esteemed is the egg-plant, native of tropical Asia, Africa, and South America. Of gourds, native to Asia, there are six species known in European gardens. There are many varieties of *Cucurbita* under cultivation in tropical and temperate regions, specially in Southern Asia. The most important is *Cucurbita maxima*, the red and yellow of the gardens. In Turkey and Asia Minor it yields an important article of diet for the people; great quantities are sold in the markets of Constantinople. The *Cucurbita Pepo* is the pumpkin, which is cultivated in Europe and North America. It is useful specially to the American backwoods farmer for cattle and pigs.

The *Oxalis Deppei* is the oca of South America; the leaves are eaten as salads, and the tubers like potatoes. The lamb's lettuce of Southern Europe is used in salads. Salsify originated in Southern Europe. Mushrooms are native in all temperate regions, in short grass. The leek came from the East, and was commonly cultivated in Egypt in the time of the Pharaohs; the Romans made great use of it, and it was probably introduced into England by them. Nero, derisively called *Porrophagus*, ate leeks several days in the month to clear his voice. It is the national badge of the Welsh, who wear it in their hats on St. David's Day. Garlic, from Asia, has been used from earliest times as an article of food. It formed part of the diet of the Israelites in Egypt, and of the laborers employed by Cheops in building his pyramid. It was largely used by the ancient Greek and Roman soldiers, sailors, and rural classes, and by African peasants. Neckam, in the twelfth

\* See "The Menu of Mankind," "Meats," and "Bread, Condiments, and Fruits," in our issues for May, 1895, December, 1895, and November, 1896.

century, recommends it as a specific against the sun's heat in field labor. "The people in places where the simoom is frequent eat garlic, and rub their lips and noses with it when they go out in the heat of summer, to prevent their suffering by the simoom," says Elphinstone. It was placed at the cross-roads by the Greeks as a supper for Hecate. Garlic and onions were invoked as deities by the Egyptians at the taking of oaths.

Cucumbers, native to the East Indies, are grown in lakes, on floats, in Cashmere, China, and Persia. They were much esteemed by the ancients; Tiberius was supplied with them daily both summer and winter. They are common in Egypt, where a drink is prepared from them when ripe. They were among the things the Israelites sighed for when weary of manna. Brussels sprouts, from Belgium; beets, recovered from the sea, native to the sea-coast of the south of Europe, and cultivated from remote times; carrots, also from the sea-coasts of Southern Europe; sage, from South Europe; rhubarb, from China and Tartary, brought to Europe in the fourteenth century, and introduced into England by Sir Matthew Lister, physician to Charles I., who gave the seed he had obtained in Italy to the botanist Parkinson,—these are familiar and valuable plants. The arrowroot, from South America, furnishes a nutritive diet for invalids and weak children.

Potatoes, native to Peru, were discovered by the Spaniards in the neighborhood of Quito, where they were cultivated by the Indians. Condor, a monk, first introduced them into Spain, whence they passed into Italy and thence to Belgium. Humboldt says that at the discovery they were cultivated in all the temperate parts of the continent from Chili to New Granada, but not in Mexico. In 1585 potatoes were taken from North Carolina and Virginia on the return of the colonists sent out by Sir Walter Raleigh, and were first cultivated on his estate near Cork. The sweet potatoes, native to the West Indies, were given to Columbus by the natives of Cuba. They were introduced into England by Sir Francis Drake, who wrote of them in praise, but forgot to send instructions to eat only the root. The gardener of Queen Elizabeth planted them, and ate some of the tops. Being disgusted by the taste, he pulled up his crop, made a fire of the pile, was attracted by the pleasant odor of the burning tubers, picked up a root, ate it, and, finding it agreeable, continued the cultivation and introduced them to the notice of others.

Of melons (*Cucumis Melo*), natives of South Asia, the varieties are grouped under ten tribes. Their culture is very ancient; the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans all grew them. They were cultivated in France in 1629. Columbus carried them to America. The watermelon is native to Africa, which fact accounts for the negro's partiality for it. The cabbage originated in Greece, where it still grows wild. It was the culture of this vegetable which Cincinnatus preferred to ruling Rome. Radishes, native to China, have been cultivated in Europe from ancient times. The cauliflower had its original habitat in Cyprus. The Indian cress of Peru, the watercress, which grows wild in Europe, Asiatic Russia, and America, and which began to be cultivated in England in this century, but was cared for by man long previously in Ger-

many, and the sour dock, of Europe and America, which is used as greens or salad in Germany and America, waited as wild weeds for many ages in their remote hiding-places for discovery, transportation, and culture, at last to be placed between the white teeth of ladies at civilized tables in the cities of the world.

Lentils, from the Himalayas, were probably among the first plants brought under cultivation by man. It was the red pottage of lentils for which Esau sold his birthright. This lentil is cultivated in India, Persia, Syria, Egypt, Nubia, North Africa, and in Europe as far north as Germany, Holland, and France. Egyptian lentils are imported chiefly from Alexandria into Europe. Considerable quantities are also brought into the United States, used chiefly by Germans, with whom lentil soup is a favorite dish.

The feet of armies had gone for ages over the humble celery in Great Britain before it was lifted up to adorn with its bleached stems the tables of the civilized world and to take a foremost rank among the luxuries which the vegetable world affords. How it would amaze the men of old to see many of their weeds eaten, as is scurvy-grass, from the sea-coasts of Northern Europe, when mixed with salads! Asparagus, originally a wild sea-coast plant of Great Britain and Russia, has come down through the ages with all the weight of Greek and Roman approval. Plato ate it by the plateful, and Aristophanes considered it a great aid to digestion. This culinary plant is closely related to the famous asphodel, which was supposed by the ancients to be the leading flower in the gardens of Elysium. According to the Roman superstition, the manes of the dead fed on the roots of asphodel. So abundant is the wild asparagus on the steppes of Russia that cattle eat it like grass. Not native to America, it has here been raised to its greatest perfection as a table delicacy. It seems to be unquestionably a stimulus to digestion, and is probably one of the most wholesome adjuncts of a dinner. The seeds in some parts of Southern Europe are dried and used as a substitute for coffee. A wild variety in Spain and Portugal is considered the crown of a salad. The amount raised in Staten Island and New Jersey for the New York market increases largely every year.

The tomato, native to South America and Mexico, derived its name from a Portuguese word, and was cultivated by the Mexicans. The horseradish, of Eastern Europe, was introduced into Western Europe and Great Britain from Russia. Beans, native of Egypt and the East Indies, have been cultivated in Europe from earliest times. Lima beans are from South America: Mrs. Trollope lamented that they were unknown in England. The pea, native of Asia, was known to the Aryans, and was brought by them into Italy and Greece. Peas have been found in the Swiss lake-dwellings of the bronze period. The turnip came from Rome. Spinach is a Persian plant, brought by the Arabs into Spain. Lettuce came from the East, and was deemed by the ancients a food of the dead, because when Adonis, the beloved of Venus, was mortally wounded by a wild boar, the weeping goddess laid him upon a bed of soft and tender lettuces, whose milky juices possess soothing and narcotic qualities. Lettuces were eaten by the

ancients at the close of their repasts, as from their cooling qualities they were considered antidotes to the heating effects of wine.

Of vetches, from Egypt, the seeds are eaten. The lupin has its home in Egypt. The chick-pea, or gram, of South Europe and India, is an important article of diet among the laboring classes in India and Egypt. The fenugreek, of South Europe, West and Central Asia, and North Africa, was used by the ancients as fodder for cattle. It is cultivated to some extent in Thuringia, Moravia, and other parts of Europe, in Morocco, and largely in Egypt and India. The fresh plant is used as an esculent in India and Egypt. Mallows, of Europe, North Africa, and Western Asia, are a common food in Egypt. The banyeh, of Egypt, is used as a food in its native country. Purslane, native of India, is used as a salad plant in Europe. It has become a weed in the United States, known as "pussly," and is the subject of some of the fun in Warner's humorous book "My Summer in a Garden." It is much used in Egypt. Melookeeyeh is also an Egyptian food.

Colocasia, the kalo plant, originated in Egypt and the Hawaiian Islands, in which latter place forty feet square planted with this vegetable will yield sufficient food for a native for a year. A square mile of it would therefore support seventeen thousand persons. The fennel, of South Europe and the west of Asia, is eaten in Egypt. The fruits and edible shoots were eaten by the ancient Romans. The cactus, or Indian fig, of South America, called *Opuntia*, or prickly pear, in Southern Europe, is used as food in Egypt. The lotos also furnishes food for the same people. Parsley came from Egypt. Mythology tells us it was used to adorn the head of Hercules.

The onion was almost an object of worship by the Egyptians about 2000 B.C. It first came from India. The leaves of the bibernell, of Europe, are used as salad. The crooked-necked squash is mentioned by Nuttall as cultivated by Indians west of the Mississippi. Pepper-grass, which grows wild on the coast, is cultivated in gardens in Europe and the United States for salads. Kale is a kind of cabbage, descended from the wild or sea cabbage, and is common along the sea-coast of England and Continental Europe. Kohl-rabi is also an exceptional variety of cabbage, descended from the wild sea-coast plant. Celeriac is a variety of celery, of the same origin. The parsnip is of unknown origin, but it belongs only in temperate regions.

The Pawnee lettuce, or field valerian, is eaten by the Oregon Indians. The cabbage palm belongs in the tropics. The *Areca oleacea* and coco palm produce edible leaf-buds. The taro, *Colocasia esculenta*, and *Arum cordifolium*, are important foods in Micronesia and Polynesia. The natives cultivate them laboriously, cutting deep trenches in the solid rock for irrigation. The pandanus of Micronesia is a chief staple of food for the natives. The poke of the United States is used as greens.

When man wants a salad he often takes the dandelion before it thrusts its yellow head up in the meadows of Europe, Central Asia, and North America, and bleaches its leaves. The root is also roasted and used as a substitute for coffee.

The soy bean is a Japanese plant, little grown in America, but sometimes used as a substitute for coffee. The Iceland moss, of the west and north of Iceland, is a good food for consumptives, and is used in Iceland in times of scarcity. Sago is a food-starch from the trunk of several palms, natives of the East Indian Archipelago. Cotton-seed, indigenous to all intertropical regions, was used as food by the peasants of Southern Europe fifty years ago. It was an old charge of abolition days that slaves were fed on cotton-seed, a charge indignantly denied by the slave-holders.

Chicory, of Europe, is extensively cultivated on the continent. The roots are roasted and ground and used as a substitute for coffee. Endive, allied to chicory, is valued as a salad, and has received the sanction of the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. Mangoes, of tropical Asia, are highly prized by the natives of the regions where they grow. Peanuts, or groundnuts, native to Africa, were introduced into North Carolina by slaves. St. John's bread tree, of South Europe and the East, yields a food which is used in Germany. Service is native to England. The artichoke, of South Europe, has been long esteemed as a vegetable, and is used in soups in Italy. The Jerusalem artichoke is a distinct plant, which is native to Brazil, and is cultivated for its root-tubers, which resemble potatoes. It is cultivated in Europe and in the United States.

The yam, of China, is grown in India, Cochin China, and the South Sea islands. It is a tuberous plant, and bears some resemblance to the sweet potato.

*Calvin Dill Wilson.*

### BEGGARS.

CHILD with the hungry eyes,  
The pallid mouth and brow,  
And the lifted, asking hands,  
I am more starved than thou.

I beg not on the street ;  
But where the sinner stands,  
In secret place, I beg  
Of God, with outstretched hands.

As thou hast asked of me,  
Raising thy downcast head,  
So have I asked of Him,  
So, trembling, have I plead.

Take this, and go thy way ;  
Thy hunger shall soon cease :  
Thou prayest but for bread,  
And I, alas ! for peace.

*Elia Higginson.*

## FOR HIS OWN PEOPLE.

## I.

THE Hawaiian Band was playing in Queen Emma Square. The night was glorious, and all Honolulu was out enjoying the music. There were tourists from the hotel, ladies in soft, diaphanous summer robes, worn delightedly in the tropic winter; men in tennis-flannels and broad hats sporting the puggaree, loved at first sight by the American tourist. There were red-coats from the English man-of-war in the harbor, and blue-jackets from Uncle Sam's white cruiser; slim, dusky Hawaiian maidens in snowy holokus, with yellow leis on their dark locks; gallant Hawaiian swains, lovers of the dusky maidens, and old men and women who watched the throng, the while they exchanged memories of Hawaii nei. Here and there in the brilliant moonlight flashed the shoulder-straps and sword-hilt of a Japanese naval officer, never off dress parade. The full moon made graceful shadows among the palms, the eucalyptus, and the lauhala trees. The perfume of tuberoses and stephanotis filled the night. The music of the famous band beat the air into rhythmic pulsations, blending richly with the hum of many voices, the calls of the native boys selling bananas and guavas, the clatter of passing wheels and hoofs, and the cadenced sound of the feet of dancers on the thick green grass. Over all was the fascinating glamour of the tropic night, soft with the breath of southern winds, strong with the strength of the blue ocean holding the land in its gentle embrace.

To the tourist, athirst for sensation, it was all curious, characteristic, entrancing. To the English and American officers the scene was but one aspect of a problem, and the little brown men from the Nanawakan saw in the whole situation only a possible opportunity to increase the power and extent of the Mikado's realm; but to the Hawaiian it was life, the life of his ancestors, of his people, his own life, on the soil that was his fathers', but, alas, is not his. It has passed from him, but he has still his child's heart, born of tropic Nature's loving kindness, sunny with the sunshine of his southland, loyal, simple, trustful, even when sore perplexed by Fate's strange shuffling of the cards in the unfamiliar white man's game that is playing in those green isles.

Malateo, dancing in the soft, white light that sifted down through the tall tops of the royal palms, knew not that he was but a part of the spectacular drama played there nightly for the pleasure of weary globe-trotters. He took no thought of Hawaii nei, nor of the sad memories of the old men and women. He only felt, vaguely, that the night was warm and enticing; that the blood surged swiftly through his strong young body; that his day's work was done, and that life was full of hope and promise of happiness. He was dancing with Liakani, his little playmate of a few years back. So, as children, they had danced and played together in the gardens of the Kame-

hameha school. So they had danced and tossed together in the surf at Waikiki. So, before to-night, they had danced to the strains of the national music in the public square.

So, and yet not so. What was the mysterious difference Malateo could never have told in words. Was it the soft swish of Liakani's white holoku as she swayed to the rhythm of the music, or was it the sweet scent of tuberose in the lei about her neck, that drew his soul and his senses toward her? Or was it the pressure of her cool, slim brown hand in his? Never before had he noted the softness and gentleness of that little hand's clasp. It was such a little hand, its long, taper fingers telling of noble birth, for Liakani was the daughter of a long line of high chiefs of old Hawaii.

And she was so beautiful. Strange that he had never before noticed this. She was tall and straight, like a young palm, with a tinge in her cheek of the last faint glow of the down-dropping tropical twilight, and her lips were touched with the color of the ohia flower. About her throat Malateo noticed a tiny chain that disappeared within the folds of her holoku's yoke. An uneasy wonder filled him. What was attached to that chain? Hawaii's maidens catch so many notions from the subtle, interloping white people. Was it a picture worn thus? If so—ah! and the firm teeth shut tightly.

With the characteristic directness of his race, he touched the chain with his finger. What was hidden? he asked, thrilling as he felt the warmth of her soft throat. She regarded him with wonder. Did not he, too, wear Pele's charm, that potent safeguard of the crater goddess, made from Pele's hair, the wind-blown, silken-fine lava caught or ever it touched earth, and borne three times around the lake of fire?

Malateo admitted that he had small faith in such things. "I let the Kahunas wear them," he said, laughing and showing his white teeth.

She clung to him anxiously. He must not laugh, she urged. These were strange times, and full of trouble for Hawaii. The people were forgetting the gods, and ruin held the land in its grasp. He and she, at least, must be true to the old faith, and to Hawaii nei. And Malateo, stirred by her earnestness and her beauty, promised to secure a charm the very next day, and to wear it faithfully.

He thought it all over as he climbed Punchbowl, on his homeward way, a few hours later, when the music was over and the crowd had fled. The night was still full of wondrous beauty. The white moonlight lay all across the city, glistening on the broad leaves of banana and ti trees, touching the palms into fantastic fairy-like forms, and shivering into thousands of rays against the mirror-set walls of the Iolani palace. But all the glittering radiance paled before his memory of the light shining from Liakani's eyes. His fingers still felt the pressure of hers, and he raised his right hand as he recalled that touch, caressing it softly as he spread out his fingers in the moonlight. They were short and thick and hot, not cool and slim like hers. They were not straight. The little finger of each hand was bent forward, and he could not straighten it. He noted the fact curiously. It was new to him, and he strained his fingers outward in the effort to bring them

into line. As he did so, a flash of tingling pain went along his arms and across his face, through his nose and cheek-bones. That queer, itching sensation was not new. It had been pretty constant of late. He remembered—

Gods of his fathers! What was it he remembered?

He gazed, in the moonlight, at his outstretched hands, while the sweat started upon his forehead. A deadly chill was at his heart, and he shook in its ague. Why could he not straighten his fingers? What was that itching sensation across his face? To his agonized mind came the memory of similar pains in ears and limbs. In between each little finger and the next one the skin was white and scaly. It peeled a little when he rubbed it.

He stared about him stupidly. His race is not gifted in the expression of tragedy. A man of another people might have given audible vent to such despair as possessed this simple soul, but not the Hawaiian. He can laugh and sing, and cry "Aloha!" when the days are sunny, but when pilikea comes he is dumb.

Malateo went forward heavily, staggering like a drunken man, until he reached home. There he threw himself across his bed and lay very still. But his brain was wrung by fierce agony. He knew that he was doomed. What Hawaiian does not know when the curse descends upon him? He saw himself an outcast in the hills, fleeing before determined pursuers, hunted like a mad dog from fastness to fastness. He saw himself taken and condemned to the living death on Molokai, and at the thought he groaned, and clutched the sides of his bed in his horror.

Then his thought took another turn.

Was there no help?

The foreign doctors could not cure. They had not cured his own uncle. Even the foreign God, to whom his uncle prayed, and who is so powerful, had not heard. Malateo himself had given small thought to the white people's God. The "Tabu" of the Christians was severe. He was young yet to think of God. He had been educated in the Christian belief in the schools, and had some appreciation of the faith, but the instincts of his ancestry were strong within him, and in this hour of his dire need his reeling brain sought pity and aid among the ruins of the ancestral Pantheon.

But how were the gods to be reached? He scarcely knew the names his forefathers had worshipped. His own father attended the native church and was a good Christian, yet Malateo remembered hearing him pray, when his grandmother was ill, to some nearer deity than the Most High, and help had come. Oh that he knew whence!

But Liakani was right. The people had forgotten the gods. They had strayed from the ancient faith, and judgment was come upon them, as it was now upon him. Why had not he, as well as Liakani, been faithful? If he had even worn Pele's charm!

Ah! the other gods, perhaps, were dead. The Almighty was very far off from all save his favored white people. But Pele still lived. Pele still reigned supreme, the volcano goddess, in her temple

on Hawaii. Surely Pele would help a Hawaiian who sought her in his dire extremity!

His blood chilled at the thought of visiting her temple. Whatever his faith, no Hawaiian is without terror at the awful spectacle on Kilauea, the last stronghold of unconquered primeval force, where fire and elemental strife reign. But if Pele, the goddess of the crater, is terrible, so, too, is the curse. And Malateo had so much to live for.

If only he could evade the lynx-eyed authorities until he could reach Hawaii and sacrifice to Pele!

## II.

He slipped away, unobserved, from the steamer, at Punalou. He fancied that a government physician who was on board eyed him curiously. During the voyage he lived in hourly dread of hearing himself challenged as a suspect. Once away from the steamer, he made his way on foot to the summit, skirting the plantations, and lurking, by day, in the dense tangles that wood the ascent. His food, for a day and a night, had been only wild guavas and the crisp, red ohela berries. Hidden in his breast were two doves that he was taking as a sacrifice. His clothing, his feet, his hands, were torn with pushing through almost impenetrable tangles. His feet were bleeding where the rough pahoe-hoe had worn his shoes away. He had the air of a wild, hunted creature, he who ten days before had danced with Liakani in Queen Emma Square.

He reached the summit at nightfall of the second day, but lingered long upon the brink, fearing the descent. The moon that had lamped Honolulu so gloriously ten nights since was not visible, but the brilliant stars outlined and intensified the depths of the black valley wherein glows Hale-mau-mau, the Everlasting Fire. The terrible vale seemed to mock him as it lay with neither leaf nor blade of grass relieving the black expanse of its horrid landscape. From where he stood Malateo could see the glow from the lake's heaving surface, and the vaporous cloud that hangs above it, lighted, as the night grew darker, by the reflection from the fiery waves. The white men, the eager, sensation-loving tourists, brave the terrors of that region in companies, but he who would implore the supreme aid of Pele must approach her alone.

Stiffly Malateo crept down the trail into the crater. The doves stirred in his breast as he moved, and even that much of life and companionship fell gratefully upon his strained senses. He reached the crater floor and began groping his way over the lava-crust to the lake. He had three miles to travel over that pitchy waste. Once his foot, tripping, broke the brittle lava. Through the cleft crust he caught sight of a fiery underglow, and the smell of sulphur assailed his nostrils. Once he fell, striking his face on a ragged projection of lava, but he felt no pain, nor knew that the blood ran down his cheek. He walked instinctively, unconscious of his footing, guided only by the glow from the distant lake. Soon he could see the tossing, fiery waves, flaming high on the troubled surface. He could hear the lapping of

the burning tide against the lava-piled banks. Across his face he felt the hot wind from off that molten sea.

It seemed a lifetime ere he reached the final descent and stood at last upon the edge of the lake. The hot lava blistered his feet, but he noted not the pain. Awe, unspeakable dread, had swallowed up every other emotion. He drew one of the doves from within his blouse, and, holding it in his hands, began a voiceless prayer to Pele. As he prayed, fear gave way before an ecstasy of worship. He raised the dove high above his head. The creature spread its wings, fluttered for a moment in the sulphur-laden air, then plunged forward and fell among the fiery waves. There was a mighty upheaval of the dark lava-crust ever forming on the surface. A great jet of flame shot heavenward, like the playing of a hellish fountain. Malateo's heart leaped with it. Pele accepted his offering! Pele heard his prayer! He loosed the second dove, and it, too, fluttered for a moment over the surface of the vapor-hung lake, and then dropped into its bosom. The crust was broken, now, in many places. Great blocks of lava tossed and churned among the fiery billows. The waves lapped up against the bank and cast showers of blood-red sparks afar on the night air. Through a little rift in the barrier a flaming stream crept, widening as it flowed, until it poured in a seething torrent at Malateo's very feet. But the leper stirred not. He forgot time, forgot life, forgot death, even. The universality that is the birthright of every human soul awoke in him and silenced the cry of self. It drove the personal hope shivering away into oblivion, and left conscious only the spirit of the man. The spirit of one man? Rather it was the spirit of the ancient faith living within this man. He was no longer Malateo the carpenter, Malateo the outcast, Malateo the leper. He was the embodiment of ancient Hawaii, come to the temple fastness of Hawaii's ancestral deity to offer sacrifice, not for himself, but for his own people, his people who had forgotten the gods and were gone astray in their own land. For himself he no longer hoped. He no longer feared. Only an intense love stirred his soul, a passionate exaltation held him, of worship for the Sacred Thing before him, the goddess of his nation, warring with the powers of the upper air for supremacy over Hawaii.

Pardon for his people! Atonement for their sin! Power with their foes! These he asked. Pele! Pele! goddess of fire! hear a Hawaiian's prayer for Hawaii!

Near, nearer he drew, until Pele's hot fumes were the breath of his nostrils. He climbed upon the very bank, and reached forth his hands in supplication for his people.

Then from the centre of the lake a column of fire was drawn upward by some irresistible force. From out its glowing depths a lambent shape seemed to lean and lure him. Nearer he yearned, self burnt from his nature, now, in that fierce flame.

His people! his people! For them he had prayed! For them his prayer was heard! For them Pele herself summoned him, to worship, to sacrifice, to purification!

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A group of tourists on the edge of the precipice above beheld a portent pass across the lake. With outstretched arms a figure ran, leaping from block to block of the tossing black surface-lava, until it was received into the central column of flame.

The awe in every face deepened as they gazed at one another in the fitful glare.

"Some tossing rock thrown up from the depths below," said The Traveller who Explains Everything.

"Of course," shuddered a hearer. "But it seemed almost human."  
*Adeline Knapp.*

## ON SMALL COURTESIES.

WE are all born but once. Most of us marry but once. We certainly can die but once. And if we look at life "as a small bundle of great things," we shall certainly not think it worth while to practise small courtesies. But if we regard it, far more truly, as "a big bundle of small things," we shall as certainly feel that few things in life are better worth doing. It may never be in our power to save anybody's life, make for anybody a fortune, shed lustre upon the family name, die for our country, or set the smallest river on fire in any way whatever. But if we conscientiously and sweetly give ourselves to the practising of small courtesies, only the recording angel can ever set down the good we shall do in our day and generation to hundreds and thousands of our fellow-creatures in the course of a lifetime.

Most people despise them as not worth doing. Few people perform them with any degree of consistency or loving-kindness. Fewer still are content to do them in the best way, unnoticed, unremembered, really feeling it to be emphatically a virtue that is its own reward. Yet it is a wonder that preachers do not urge it upon their congregations from a thousand pulpits,—on off-Sundays, say, when they are not pitching into the Pope, if they be Protestants, or into the Protestants, if they be Roman Catholics, and have time for the marrow of all creeds, and can be content to let the bones take care of themselves. And if any sweet woman should just set for herself this one "life-work,"—one hears so much of "life-works" in these days,—"I will do for all others with whom I come in contact day by day the small kindnesses which most leave undone, or neglect," she would deserve richly to have erected to her the third monument ever put up to a woman. I believe that there are at present only two,—the Taj Mahal, and the tomb of Cæcilia Metella—stay: only the other day I saw in a foreign paper a notice of "the Madame Haughery monument in New Orleans," and could but smile, thinking how amazed the shade of dear old Margaret Haughery, the Irish baker whom all New Orleans loved for her good bread and her good deeds, would be to see that foolish "Madame."

And if any sage could know her, living, or appreciate her dead, he would certainly account her greater than Alcibiades, Cæsar, Tamerlane,

or Napoleon. For how would her lovely thoughts and words and deeds have clothed as with so many spears of grass, and made vernal and fresh and fair, the world which they made desolate who are called the great ! Did anybody's fringe catch in a nail, she would gently and patiently untangle it. Did anybody's dinner have to be saved, she would keep it hot. Did any one thirst, she would in a trice be ready with her glass of water, cold. Was anybody crossly struggling with a stud or cuff-button, she would calmly insinuate it where it belonged, with a soothing word and pleasant smile to take the edge off a temper already sorely tried by many cares and griefs, perhaps. Should any *débutante* linger shyly in the corners of strange drawing-rooms, she would seek her out and introduce to her the right people, and see that she danced every dance. Did any shy young man spill his soup at a dinner, hers would be the hand that quietly provided an extra napkin, and hers the tongue that led the conversation to other topics.

Should a buffeted book-agent ring her bell and ask in weary accents for the lady of the house, she could spare time to ask him to take a seat and rest a bit, to draw near the fire, or to have a fan ; she would listen politely, and part from him with some courteous speech that would bloom like a rose in Paradise all day long in a dusty heart. Was any one travelling with a stomach that would have greatly preferred to be left at home, here she would be in an instant with a camphor- or cologne-bottle in her hand and an offer to give up her seat, which faced the engine. Should any lady be caught out in a shower in all her Easter bravery, hers would be the umbrella sent down by the maid or carried in person. Did any stranger stop bewildered by some circle or park to find out where such a street and number was, the lovely woman would take her to the very door.

Do we not all know her ? Do we not all love her ? Is she not a public benefactress and private delight, the lovely woman ? It is she who, seeing a dusty hat, always has a whisk for it. It is she who, seeing you in a mauve gown at her "tea," says, "You must have some of my violets to set off that pretty dress." If you were in pink, she would have roses to match ; if in white, chrysanthemums. If you are buttoning your gloves in a street-car, out comes her glove-hook ; and if you are at home, she will tighten the buttons on them while you are dressing. Has your hat been blown askew, and are you entering some house in a blowsy state remarkable at a "function," it is she who straightens it and offers you a bonnet-pin : she has always one to spare.

Do you tear your flounce, she has a pin or a thread and needle for you in a twinkling. Do you want to send a telegram, she has a blank and a messenger for you at once. Have you no one to go down the street for you to match a ribbon or post a letter, she will do both for you with intelligence and despatch. Have you friends come on a visit, hers will be the first invitation that will reach them, I can assure you. Are you ailing and despondent, from her will come a little tray of dainties, a kind note. Are you only dull, she will send you a new book. Do you lack a blank card, she will give you one, with a pencil, well pointed.

Has she a carriage, lots of sick folk, poorer folk, kinsfolk, strangers, get what she calls "a breath of fresh air?" she might say of her way of doing it, "a breath of heaven." Has she a hot-house, the hospitals, the churches, the governesses, get lovely flowers; the old and sick around her are not forgotten. Has she a fine library, she will even lend her books to the "living epistles" about her, that they may be diverted and cheered in hours of gloom and unrest. Has she an opera-box, she often fills it with people who haven't. Has she tickets for other entertainments, cook goes to the theatre with her brother Bob.

Has she none of these worldly advantages, the lovely woman is still the lovely woman everywhere, at all times, under all circumstances, God bless her! The constant practice of the small kindnesses, courtesies, charities of life has made her what she is, and there are few things on earth that are lovelier.

*Frances Courtenay Baylor.*

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#### NOVELISTS AS COSTUMERS.

COSTUME as a factor in the romance of life has long been recognized as a thing not to be ignored. A parasol held at just the right angle, a ribbon bow tied with the proper touch of coquetry, a feather drooping over exactly the softest coil of hair, and the novelist may dip his pen in his ink to record for mankind a love-tale. The writers of light fiction, recognizing the importance of "how one looks," certainly make a prodigal use of fine attire, sachet powder, and qualifying adjectives in introducing their heroines to the public. Who does not remember those delightful days when he or she was young and cautiously bore to some secret corner, safe from parental supervision, those story-papers thrown into the yard, whose tales were to be continued in numbers not to be thrown in yards? What gorgeous costumes these ladies did wear! The jewels which Lothair purchased for the divine Theodora, or had set in the cross for the religious Miss Arundel, were mere trifles compared to the diamonds possessed by these ladies. They always made fresh toilets for every occasion, appearing in "regal splendor" at night, "chaste elegance" in the afternoon, and "charming simplicity" in the mornings. They frequently crushed the most priceless lace handkerchiefs in their hands, used "indefinable perfumes," and delighted in blue garments of the shade of May-day skies and in white ones of the fleeciness of summer clouds.

The memory of these very well dressed ladies, whose costumes excited such unconquerable envy in the hearts of their feminine readers, disposes one to wonder just how much of a wardrobe a heroine really does need to secure her a permanent home on our library shelves, and to bring about the all-important event of the complete subjugation of a hero. When we remind ourselves of the wardrobes of many well-known ladies of fiction, and reflect upon their successes and failures,

involuntarily we ask ourselves if the light fiction writers do not give themselves a vast amount of unnecessary trouble. We feel disposed to regret that they were not present on the Christmas Day when Catherine Morland's great-aunt lectured her niece on dress.

"Dress," that good lady gave Catherine to understand, "is at all times a frivolous distinction, and excessive solicitude about it often destroys its own aim."

Certainly the light fiction writer whose "chief concern is what gown and what head-dress" a woman must wear on each occasion differs from the author of "*Northanger Abbey*," who censures poor Catherine—already humbled by the great-aunt's lecture—for lying awake ten minutes one Wednesday night debating between her spotted and her tamboured muslin, being prevented from the purchase of a new one for the occasion in question only by the shortness of time. "This," says the eminently sensible authoress, "would have been an error in judgment, great though not uncommon, from which one of the other sex rather than her own, a brother rather than a great-aunt, might have warned her; for man only can be aware of the insensibility of man towards a new gown. It would be mortifying to the feelings of many ladies could they be made to understand how little the heart of man is affected by what is costly or new in their attire; how little it is biassed by the texture of their muslin, and how unsusceptible of peculiar tenderness towards the spotted, the sprigged, the mull, or the jacquet. Woman is fine for her own satisfaction alone. No man will admire her the more, no woman like her the better, for it. Neatness and fashion are enough for the former, and a something of shabbiness or impropriety will be more endearing to the latter. But not one of these grave reflections troubled the tranquillity of Catherine,"—nor, we fear, restrains the pens of the writers of light novels. What, on the other hand, is the state of the fashions with the more serious novelists?

Although the author of "*Jane Eyre*" considered the author of "*Emma*" "a very incomplete and rather insensible woman," she was certainly of her mind concerning clothes when she packed Jane's trunk on the occasion of the departure from Lowood for Thornfield. There was the plain black frock which, "though Quaker-like, at least had the merit of fitting to a nicety," one clean white tucker, the black silk which Mrs. Fairfax fastened for its owner on the occasion of her first evening with Mr. Rochester, the best dress of silver gray, purchased for Miss Temple's wedding, and which was too fine to be worn "except on first-rate occasions," and the lilac gingham in which she threatened to be married when Mr. Rochester was bent on following the custom of the light novelists. We hear a vast deal concerning Miss Ingram's clothes, and very queer ones they were, almost confirming the early critics in the suspicion that the author of "*Jane Eyre*" must be a man, since no woman would array a lady in a morning gown of sky-blue crape and twist an azure scarf in her hair for breakfast,—but I must confess that I have never seen what good the fine clothes of this beauty did her. Certainly it was the owner of the clean white tucker who became Mrs. Rochester, and whose name, emblazoned in gold, shines forth on our library shelves.

Naturally, the author of "Waverley" suggests himself as a very prince of costumers among novelists; but, strange to say, he devotes a great many more yards of silk and velvet to his gentlemen than to his ladies. Take, for instance, the Fair Maid of Perth; not once does he enhance the beauty of this popular lady with any elaborate description of her clothes, leaving her to charm by virtue of herself, and us to picture her as dressed to suit our fancy. We are not left ignorant of what her father wore, and we all recall the feud-loving armorer "going through the process of his toilet with more than ordinary care" on St. Valentine's morning, but of Catherine's costume on that eventful day we are told only that she begged time to don her kirtle. Robert Stewart's garments on the occasion of his confession to the Prior of the Dominicans do not lack description; and who will ever forget Conachar springing like a roebuck, in his tartan closed at throat and elbows with necklace and armlets of gold, his hauberk of steel shining like silver, his arms profusely ornamented, and the eagle's feather and chain of gold in his bonnet? But on this same occasion we have not the faintest idea of the fashion or cut of the Fair Maid's costume. Yet, notwithstanding the author's indifference to Miss Glover's wardrobe, who ever possessed more completely the power of subjugating hearts than this very Catherine of Perth?

The same condition of affairs prevails with regard to other Waverley heroines. We hear a great deal about "jet-black hair," "cheeks delicately tinged with the rose," of "finely formed shapes," and of "brows which might have become Juno herself," but very little concerning the wardrobes of the possessors of these charms. We know that Flora MacIvor was once engaged in making a garment of white flannel; that Helen MacGregor wore her plaid like a man; that Effie Deans's "brown russet gown set off a shape which time perhaps might be expected to render too robust;" that Catherine Seyton was wont to vanish behind a veil, and that, moreover, she followed foreign fashions in the cut of her jacket and petticoat; that Margaret Ramsay masqueraded in a page's gray suit of the finest cloth; that Clara Mowbray wore her locks in a lace of gold and arranged in the fashion of a Greek nymph; that Rachel Geddis atoned for the "absence of everything like fashion or ornament by the most perfect neatness and cleanliness of her dress;" and that Eveline Berenger, "after laying aside her mourning, wore a kirtle of white, with an upper robe of pale blue completing her costume, with a veil of white gauze so thin as to float about her like the misty cloud usually painted around the countenance of a seraph;" but only Rebecca of York, Amy Robsart, Madge Wildfire, and the Glee Maiden are distinguished by elaborate wardrobes. When we reflect upon the extraordinary amount of life's discomforts which falls to the share of these four ladies, we are not indisposed to agree with Miss Austen that "woman is fine for her own satisfaction alone." To Miss Diana Vernon, however, Scott has given the distinction of possessing the first riding habit with a man's coat, vest, and hat ever worn in England.

Miss Austen, always sensible and consistent, lives up to her own opinions and sets an example of how judiciously to ignore the costume of a heroine and yet give her a position in literature. It is true that

she permits Fanny Price to consult Miss Crawford about her dress for the ball; she lets us know that this dress had its "grander parts;" but these same "grander parts" are left entirely to our imagination. We know that Miss Crawford had a box of trinkets, for Fanny chose therefrom a chain on which to hang her brother's cross, but our souls are certainly not fretted to envy by any description of these baubles. We are informed of the "neatness and propriety" of Fanny's gown, of the "general elegance" of her appearance; we know from Lady Bertram that the dress was a present from Sir Thomas when "dear Mrs. Rushforth married," and we are aware that though Lady Bertram had a habit of never being "certain of anybody's dress or anybody's place at supper but her own," on this occasion she was moved to remark of Fanny, "Yes, she does look very well;" yet, though from all this we feel persuaded that Fanny's dress was all that it should have been, only Miss Austen knows whether it was spotted, sprigged, or tamboured.

Again, we are informed that Mrs. Price worried over something to hold Susan's clothes, but we remain in the densest ignorance as to which of Fanny's garments were to be packed by the harassed parent. Mr. Collins, on the occasion of the dinner at Rosings, told Elizabeth Bennet not to make herself uneasy about her apparel, but merely to put on whatever of her clothes was superior to the rest; but here again we are not informed of what this best consisted; nor are we told concerning the hats which Kitty and Lydia saw on the afternoon when they had been "above an hour happily employed in visiting an opposite milliner." To be sure, Lydia exclaimed, "Look, I have bought this bonnet. I do not think it very pretty, but I thought I might as well buy it as not. I shall pull it all to pieces as soon as I get home, and see if I cannot make it up any better;" and when her sister abused it as ugly, we are permitted to know that there were two or three much uglier in the shop, and that Lydia intended to purchase "some prettier-colored satin to trim it with fresh," and that then she thought "it would be very tolerable;" but we are never told if the bonnet retrimmed met with her sister's approval, and to this day we have not the remotest idea of the color of the satin selected for the trimming. Even on the important occasion of the marriage of Miss Woodhouse we are merely told that "the wedding was very much like other weddings where the parties had no taste for finery," and that "Mrs. Elton, from the particulars brought her by her husband, thought it all extremely shabby and very inferior to her own,"—very little white satin, very few lace veils,—"a most pitiable business, that would make Selina stare when she heard of it."

The author of "Evelina," it would appear, was of a like mind concerning the fashions with the utilitarian Miss Austen, since she withholds all description of her heroine's wardrobe on so important an occasion as a first visit to London. If it were not for Madame Duval's worldly mind, we should never have known that it had "a monstrous ugly look for ladies to come to Ranelagh with their hats on, and that no such fashion prevailed in Paris." To Sir Clement's equally frivolous mind we owe our knowledge that he, like Madame Duval, was no advocate of hats, since he pronounced them a most tantalizing fashion,

"for where there is beauty, they only serve to shade it; and when there is none, to excite a most unavailing curiosity."

We know, moreover, that Madame Duval had a liking for Lyons silk, since she grieved so over the one which was ruined on the occasion of the disaster to the coach, and we are listeners to a discussion concerning rouge; but of Evelina's costume on the night when the Misses Braughton caught her at the glass we are not told a detail except that it was totally inappropriate to wear to sit in the seats selected by the Misses Braughton, but eminently the thing in which to accompany the Mirvans. Had not Sir Clement, later in the evening, distinguished Evelina by her head-dress at the opera, we should never have known that she wore one. Yet did not Evelina startle England and lead captive a Lord Orville? What elaborately arrayed heroine has ever done more?

While Richardson did not greatly concern himself about Miss Harlowe's wardrobe, he permits us to know that she had laces and linens laid away in her drawers, and lets Mrs. Harlowe write her daughter that "Patterns of the richest silks have been sent for. They are come. Your father will have them sent up to you. Your father intends you six suits at his own expense. Mr. Solnes intends to present you with a set of jewels, besides a fine allowance of pin-money."

But alas for the silks!

"I threw down with disdain the patterns," writes Clarissa, who further expresses scorn of the jewels, and of a velvet suit which "would cut a figure at a county fair."

We remember, too, that Mrs. Harlowe inquires, "But about the laces, Clary;" and we recall a bundle of linen which Miss Harlowe made up before her flight; and who can know how many eighteenth-century tears were shed over the brown lutestring dress willed away by the dying Clarissa?

Though many have declared the author of "*Romola*" to have been a badly dressed woman, she is certainly not indifferent to the costumes of her heroines. Who is unaware that she trusts to the contrast between Maggie's white, well rounded arm "with the tenderness in the dimpled elbow," "the gently lessening curves down to the delicate wrist," "the tiniest, almost imperceptible nicks in the soft firmness," and the ball-dress made from Aunt Pullet's black brocade and Lucy's lace, for an effect on both Mr. Stephen Guest and the reader? The first thing that we are told of Miss Brooke is that she looked well in shabby clothes, and certainly Rosamond Vincy is an embodiment of strong will in pale blue. No one can forget Aunt Glegg's numerous "fronts," nor Aunt Pullet's balloon sleeves, abundant mantle, and large befeathered and beribboned bonnet, which moved George Eliot to compare the sorrows of a Hottentot with a fashionably dressed woman in grief. We all recall Lucy's slim prettiness, set off by an abundant dress of white crape at Miss Guest's thoroughly condescending party; a pink kerchief brings to mind poor, pretty, vain little Hetty Sorrel; to name Gwendolen Harleth is to see a vision "gotten up like a serpent, all green and silver;" and to the patient Tantripp the world owes its knowledge "that three folds at the bottom of your skirt and a plain quilling in your bonnet is quite consistent for a second year."

The author of "Vanity Fair" disdains to disturb the even balance of his realism with undue attention to costuming his puppets for the play of life. Mrs. Rawdon Crawley may rouge, may dress, may wear Lord Steyne's diamonds; Amelia may have her "sweet sprigged muslins" and her cashmere shawls; Madame D'Ivry may go to the Assembly at Baden in a dress of stupendous splendor, while Miss Newcome resumes her rôle of *ingénue* in a plain white frock; but with their author fashion is only one known quantity in the problem of vanity, worth only its meed of satire.

The caricaturist who is responsible for the "dirty coarse apron and bib" of the Marchioness, the black bombazine of Mrs. Pipchin, and the "large bonnet trembling with bows" of Mrs. Jarley, turns clothes to his own end and makes little Miss Flite madder still in a squeezed bonnet with reticule on arm, Mrs. Skewton falseness itself in youthful costumes, with false fronts, false eyebrows, false teeth, and handkerchiefs faint and sickly with essences, Dolly Varden, queen of coquettes,— "the very pink and pattern of good looks,"—"in a smart little cherry-colored mantle with a hood of the same drawn over her head, and upon the top of that hood a little straw hat trimmed with cherry-colored ribbons and worn the merest trifle on one side,—just enough, in short, to make it the wickedest and most provoking head-dress that ever milliner devised. And, not to speak of the manner in which these cherry-colored decorations brightened her eyes, or vied with her lips, or shed a new bloom on her face, she wore such a cruel little muff and such a heart-rending pair of shoes."

After all, when the novels are read, and the costumes duly admired or condemned, do we not conclude that the true secret in making use of costume as an end in fiction lies in following a plan not unlike the conduct of Miss Sharp regarding the laces and brocades which she purloined during house-cleaning time from the closets in the house of Sir Pitt? We all remember how she kept them well out of sight until she desired a *costume de cour* of "the most elegant and brilliant description," so effective as to compel Lady Jane to own sorrowfully to herself that she was quite inferior in taste to Mrs. Becky, and Mrs. Bute Crawley and her daughter down in the country to give vent to their honest indignation at the airs of the "sandy-haired, green-eyed, French rope-dancer's daughter."

The mistake of the light fiction writers in regard to costume is in not keeping clothes in the background until the moment when only clothes can produce the desired effect. They make a heroine so fine for breakfast that nothing remains for a *costume de cour*.

Eva A. Madden.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH. BEFORE CHRISTMAS.

**Men, Women, and  
Manners in Colo-  
nial Times.** By Syd-  
ney George Fisher.  
Illustrated.

There has been a great deal written in a loose and accidental way about Colonial life, and very fascinating much of it is. There is no reason why accurate chapters in the historic vein should not also have charm. That they may do so when penned by a student of history who is also a writer of literary suavity is witnessed by these entertaining, lifelike, and substantial papers by Sydney George Fisher, called *Men, Women, and Manners in Colonial Times*. The aim of the book is to picture comprehensively the life of our forefathers in their homes, political trials, wars, religion, social relations, periods of sentiment, and seasons of suffering. This is done in a number of contrasted essays entitled Cavaliers and Tobacco, dealing with Virginia; From Puritans and Witches to Literature and Philosophy, giving the austerer annals of New England; The Land of Steady Habits, Connecticut; The Isle of Errors, Rhode Island; The White Mountains and the Green, New Hampshire (including Vermont); Quaker Prosperity, Pennsylvania (including Delaware); Nova Caesarea, New Jersey; Manhattan and the Tappan Zee, New York; Puritans and Catholics on the Chesapeake, Maryland; Landgraves, Pirates, and Caziques, the Carolinas; Oglethorpe and his Colony, Georgia.

The book is rememberable by reason of its appeal to facts. Many current errors are exploded, such as the marriage of Pocahontas to Captain John Smith, but many pretty and romantic truths, such as the story of Agnes Surriage, are made patent, so that the result is as pleasing as fiction, with the added assurance of certainty so far as the researches of a ripe and sympathetic scholar can verify it. Those who have tasted the pleasure of ancestor-worship in the less substantiated form will find here matter for many an hour's study and entertainment, with hints for further reading at the sources themselves for such as wish to follow Mr. Fisher's lead.

It is safe to say that these two volumes from the Lippincott press form a set more attractive in external appearance, in bounteous illustrations of places and persons of the Colonial era, and in internal matter, than any hitherto put forth for the delectation of loyal Americans.

**With Feet to the  
Earth.** By Charles  
M. Skinner.

Two striking books have been given us in as many years by Charles M. Skinner, and now, at Christmas, a third, of finer fibre than its forerunners, is added. The last volume, published by the Lippincotts, is a revelation of personal character such as few contemporary writers have vouchsafed. It is a collection of ten papers, inseparably connected, all dealing with the one delightful subject of

country walking, bicycling, or travelling in any kind upon "the footpath way," and it is called, with hearty aplomb, *With Feet to the Earth*. The volume itself is a delight to the eye, as its contents are to "that inward eye, which is the bliss of solitude."

Taking the chapters *seriatim*, they run first to an impassioned outburst on the pleasures of tramping in the open, called *The Wanderer*. Then there are some boyhood memories of a charming order, called *Reminiscent and Personal*. Following this is *Some Sample Walks*, with itinerary, and enticing description of near-home tours. Then comes a chapter *Partly Practical*, suggesting outfit. After this is a rambling paper on *Night Prowls in the Streets*, followed by *Some Humbugs of Science*, which deals not very gently with the mystifying nomenclature of botanists. A *Rustler's Conscience* is a romantic episode of the Yellowstone, and *Satisfaction with the Country, Solitude and Company*, and *Autumn Sights and Musings*, are in the vein of sentiment wherein Mr. Skinner is at his very best. Strangely enough, the last two papers form a fascinating commentary on two named almost identically in Charles Conrad Abbott's book, noticed elsewhere in this issue. It is rare that so favorable a chance is afforded for the comparative criticism of two writers with so much sentiment in common yet so varied in literary method and point of view.

No book that has come to hand in the memory of the writer has expressed better the everlasting charm, the Berserker enthusiasm, of country tramping.

**The Freedom of the Fields, and Travels in a Tree-Top.** By Charles Conrad Abbott.

"The poetry of earth is never dead." This is a truth which Charles Conrad Abbott has grasped with a deep emotion, and from its promptings he has drawn chapters which reveal the poetry of earth, the sentiment in common things, as they have rarely been interpreted. The last nature-book by Dr. Abbott is called *The Freedom of the*

*Fields*. Like many of its predecessors, it emanates from the Lippincott press, and it has been clad in the fine linen of the bindery as it richly deserves. *The Freedom of the Fields* is not essentially different from Dr. Abbott's previous books. The freshness of the open air and the fragrance of wild flowers haunt its pages. It deals in a spirit of comradeship with the life of field and wood and river, and touches on the odd human characters who dwell by the remote countryside. These are Dr. Abbott's favorite pals. He had rather spend a day in the company of the Eel-Man by the river than be the guest of luxury. He sympathizes with what is real, however humble, and in response he receives revelations which lend his books a haunting charm. The very chapter-heads of *The Freedom of the Fields* betray its quiet allurements,—An April Day-Dream, The Changeful Skies, Passing of the Bluebird, An Apathetic August, A Foretaste of Autumn, The Effects of a Drought, Winter-Green, The Witchery of Winter, Company and Solitude, Dreaming Bob, Winkle, the Eel-Man, Windfalls, My Neighbor's Wood-Shed.

With this delightful book, in a uniform cover and packed in a neat box, is served the previous volume by the same author called *Travels in a Tree-Top*. These combined form *Abbott's Fireside and Forest Library*, than which, with its happy illustrations and ornamental features, no better holiday gift could be conceived.

**Picturesque Burma,  
Past and Present.  
By Mrs. Ernest  
Hart. Illustrated.**

There is no subject so little understood yet so vitally interesting as the relations of the English conquerors to their Indian subjects. Until Kipling gave us glimpses of the picturesque side of this Oriental life we nearly ignored it. And yet in color, ceremonial, character, and scenery

India is without a peer.

We have had no end of fancy; now it is time for fact, and in the sumptuous volume called *Picturesque Burma, Past and Present*, fact is supplied in its most pleasing form. The author, Mrs. Ernest Hart, travelled with open eyes and receptive ears through Burma in 1895, and hence her facts are up to date. But there is everything in the treatment. To a lucid style of narrative Mrs. Hart joins an artistic temperament, as shown by her sketches here reproduced, and this last has enabled her to set forth with singular clearness the wealth and color, simple grace and architectural grandeur, as they stand out in glowing contrast with the tragedy and filth, squalor and superstitions of the natives. The trip up the famous Irawadi from Rangoon to Mandalay brings the "chunkin'" of Kipling's steamer within earshot and makes more real the melodious "Road to Mandalay." Indeed, at every turn such light is thrown by fact upon fiction as will be of lasting value to readers.

Much history was made in Burma during the events which led up to its conquest in 1885, and this is told in graphic chapters bristling with human sacrifice and wild superstition. Indeed, it would be hard to parallel the atrocities committed by King Theebaw and his wicked Queen Supayah Lat, but for the circumstantial account of the introduction of opium among the abstemious natives by the English. This insidious poison perpetuated for years the human sacrifice of a homicidal dynasty, but its sale is now happily checked.

*Picturesque Burma* abounds in handsome illustrations. There are ten photogravures of natives and places, two useful maps, and over a hundred text plates. Nothing could be devised more suitable as a gift for a lover of substantial books, and those who secure it for themselves will have a well-spring of intellectual pleasure and profit.



**The Works of Rabelais. The Confessions of Rousseau. Illustrated.**

Rabelais and Rousseau are as essential to the comprehensive reader as are Rembrandt and Velasquez to the painter. They are the epoch-making authors whose works everybody should know. But, unlike most books formed for study, these are not "harsh and crabbed." They have

been the delight of generations of readers in all lands. Hence it is that new editions come forth each year in a dress to suit contemporary taste.

The present issues are in the best style of present-day book-making, with appropriate illustrations, and they will be valued by those seeking Christmas gifts as in the right spirit and of the right size, shape, and looks. The text of the Rousseau is founded on that published anonymously in 1790-96, with such modifications as later criticism has suggested. There are ample notes besides. The Rabelais translation is that of Sir Thomas Urquhart and Peter Motteux, fully revised and accompanied by useful notes. The Lippincotts issue these excellent editions in this country.

*Stories of Famous Songs.* By S. J. Adair Fitz-Gerald.

"Let me make the ballads of a nation, and I care not who makes its laws." This is a trite enough adage, but a marvelously wise one, and the author of *Stories of Famous Songs*, fresh from the Lippincotts, has been inspired by its wisdom to make a book which will win to the heart of every American. The idea of the beautiful volume of over four hundred pages is to bring into convenient compass the history, anecdotes, romantic associations, or musical facts connected, with those ballads of English-speaking nations which touch the heart and fill the eyes with memories, or which flow forth in convivial company to the sparkle of wine or laughter. Some of the universal songs, as *Home, Sweet Home*, *Auld Lang Syne*, *The Star-Spangled Banner*, *Yankee Doodle*, *Kathleen Ma-vourneen*, *The Last Rose of Summer*, and a dozen others, are specially dealt with, and following these chapters are divisions entitled *Concerning Some Favorite Songs*, *Some Old Songs and Some New*, *Some Continental Songs*, *Concerning Some Welsh Songs*, *Some Scottish Songs*, *Irish Songs*, *Ancient and Modern*, and *The British National Anthem*, *God Save the King*. Some of the narratives are as captivating as good fiction, notably that upon *Ever of Thee*.

Mr. Fitz-Gerald has collated his facts with assiduous care and scholarship, and his book is an enduring addition to the literature of music.

*The General's Double.* By Captain Charles King.

Captain King cannot make a dull book. Some of his tales may be less brilliant than others, but all are interesting to the last dot, and this latest, as usual from the Lippincott press, is by all odds one of the most thoroughly absorbing of the list. It is a story of an old homestead in the South and of its patrician inmates. The mansion of the Heatherwoods lay within the Union lines, but the family was unregenerate, and two of its Confederate members were within, wounded and under parole. Then came Stuart's famous raid, and the prisoners were given a chance to escape, but the noble matron of the house reminded them of their parole, and they remained true to the pledge. But Belle Heatherwood loved a Union soldier, the General's Double, and the outcome of this was infinite pain, for he had a rival in the Confederate ranks whose gray nearly prevailed over the blue: yet in the end all was well. The great charge of Pickett at Gettysburg is vividly described by a pen not too much immersed in history to be robbed of romantic charm, and the entire battle of Gettysburg is given in heroic glimpses finer than in many a set description.

Captain King has seldom set himself the task of portraying the scenes of the great rebellion. He is equipped in every way for the work, and this graphic book, with its bewitching love-vein and its military surprises and escapes, makes us clamor for more of the same kind.

*Symphonies and their Meaning.* By Philip H. Goeppe.

The subject which is now uppermost among people of culture is music. In opera, concert, private soirée, and the domestic circle the development of musical taste has quietly progressed until we are suddenly awakened by a general clamor for more exact knowledge.

This has led to much ephemeral matter in the periodicals, and now to this standard book, giving scholarly views and technical facts in a simplified style

adapted for people of taste whose opportunities for exhaustive study are limited.

*Symphonies and their Meaning*, by Philip H. Goepp, is published by the Lippincotts in a shapely volume. Mr. Goepp is a thorough student and executant of music, but he has the rare gift among musicians of an ability to write clearly and in a popular vein of the severer phases of his art. His expressed aim in preparing the present volume is to make understood by the casual hearer the more abstruse compositions of the masters, and only by understanding them in some degree technically can any one value them as they demand. The author traces the rise of the symphony through the sonata, and gives examples in musical notes which will assist the learner and stimulate the musician. He also furnishes chapters on the masters of symphony, in which the characteristic quality of each is made plain without the reiteration of biographic facts. The book is one to secure and to keep at a time when the world is agog about its subject.

The Beauties of  
Marie Corelli.  
Selected by Annie  
Mackay.

The gatherers of literary aftermath can find good grain only where the sowing has been rich. Dickens has had his gleaners, and George Eliot, and now Marie Corelli, the favored of the Queen and the idol of countless readers the world over. The precious little volume from the Lippincotts, which contains the concentrated essence of Marie Corelli's novels, is pleasing to the eye and easy to the hand, and it will be thumbed the year through by those who are fortunate enough to have it as a Christmas gift. The selections have been made with taste and judgment by Annie Mackay, and they comprise characteristic extracts from *Barabbas*, *The Sorrows of Satan*, *The Murder of Delicia*, and indeed all Miss Corelli's famous books. Wit, wisdom, shrewd opinions, satire, and humor lie intermingled in the hundred or so pages which form the unique volume.

A Humorous His-  
tory of Greece. By  
Charles M. Snyder.  
Illustrated.

Among the few lasting records of Bill Nye's literary work were his jocular Histories of Great Britain and of the United States. These were published through the suggestion of the J. B. Lippincott Company, and they stand as permanent acquisitions of many a library, antidotes to melancholy, and perennial good company. That the earliest civilization should not be neglected, the same publishers now put forth *A Humorous History of Greece*, by another wit, whose fame is hidden behind the "hump" of a certain hook-and-eye. Charles M. Snyder is a worthy successor to Nye, though his fun is of another species. It is wit rather than drollery which characterizes these pages, and the introduction of the Neglected Poet forms a feature Nye wholly lacked. Indeed, some of Mr. Snyder's most laughable and brilliant flashes are uttered by this poet, whose verse can never more rest neglected.

The history of Greece from the earliest times to the death of Alexander is traced by prose, poem, and picture in a manner which will tickle the most sedate palate. The artists, who are in entire harmony with the author, are F. McKernan, John Sloan, and W. M. Goodes.

Montaigne, and  
Other Essays. By  
Thomas Carlyle.  
With Foreword by  
S. R. Crockett.

In 1820-23, Thomas Carlyle, afterwards to be a prevailing voice in the world of thought, contributed a series of papers to *Brewster's Edinburgh Encyclopedia* which received his best scholarship and workmanship into their structure and stand to-day as models of a great man's early promise. Any word of Carlyle's is precious, and these come as an echo of his voice after its source has long been stilled, for they have lain half a century unpublished as his, and indeed the paper on Montucla has never before found its true attribution. The sixteen papers beside that already mentioned deal with such subjects as Montaigne, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Montesquieu, Montfaucon, Dr. John Moore, Sir John Moore, Necker, Nelson, The Netherlands, Newfoundland, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Northumberland, Mungo Park, William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, and William Pitt the Younger. This is a wide array, and it is a source of enlightenment to observe the masterful manner in which the young literary giant handles such diversified topics, each conclusively and as if it were his own.

The volume has for frontispiece a photogravure of Boehm's celebrated bust of Carlyle, and it is further enriched by a Foreword, sympathetic and well put, from S. R. Crockett, a fellow-countryman.

The Poetical Works  
of Lord Byron. Il-  
lustrated. Four  
Volumes.

There never has been a time when Lord Byron was neglected by those of literary taste, but the great book-reading world had for half a generation passed him over for a brood of poets not fit to twitter around his casement. Now, and suddenly, this is all changed. The hearts and heads for whom he wrote acknowledge anew his vital voice and demand to have his poems. Edition has followed edition, but they are out of the reach of the many, saving through the public library. The Lippincotts have long possessed the authentic text of Tom Moore's edition of *Byron's Poetical Works*, and they now, very seasonably for both Christmas and popular demand, put forth a new issue, embellished with plates which actually illustrate. These consist of portraits of Byron's distinguished friends and of pictures of places he has made famous, and, with the ample notes by Tom Moore, they furnish the reader such an acquaintance with Byron's environment as is essential to a full understanding and valuation of his works.



**"My birthday cake is made with  
Cleveland's Baking Powder"**

**A WASH FOR CARPETS.**—Dissolve four ounces of Castile soap, or any pure make, in four quarts of boiling water. When cool, add five ounces of aqua ammoniac, two and a half ounces of alcohol, the same amount of glycerin, and two ounces of ether. Cork tightly. To clean a carpet, use about a teacupful to a pail of water. To clean a soiled coat or black garment, use two tablespoonfuls to a pint of strong black coffee. To remove grease-spots, use without diluting.

**HIS BUSINESS-LIKE WAY.**—Young Mr. Bizz (briskly to fair proprietor of photograph-gallery).—"I've dropped in, Miss Frame, without much preparation, in the style I usually do when I make up my mind I want anything. Can you take me just as I am?"

Miss Frame.—"Certainly, Mr. Bizz. What style do you wish,—cabinet or carte?"

Mr. Bizz.—"What style? Great Cæsar! Did you think I'd come in with these clothes on to have my picture taken? I'm asking you to marry me, Miss Frame."—*Pearson's Weekly*.

#### SOMETIMES IT HAPPENS SO.

How did she know his heart was hers?

He spoke no word

Of love to her. How did she know

That when she passed or touched him—so—

His pulse was stirred?

How did she read his secret thoughts

And never err?

How did she know her glances thrilled

His soul?—that all his heart was filled

With love for her?

How did she know their life would be

One grand, sweet song?

To tell the truth, she didn't know

These things. She thought that they were so,

But she was wrong.


*Pearson's Weekly.*

**SORRY FOR THE SINNERS.**—A little girl was graciously permitted one bright Sunday to go with her mamma to hear papa preach. It was a time of great rejoicing and responsibility, and the little face was all alight with happy anticipation.

Now, it chanced that on this special occasion papa's sermon was of the "warning" order, and his earnest voice rang solemnly in the Sunday quiet. After a moment of breathless surprise and horror, the little listener's soul was wrought upon with a great pity for the poor mortals upon whom so much wrath was descending.

She rose excitedly to her feet, and, her wide, reproachful eyes just peeping over the back of the seat, called out, in sweet, chiding tones,—

"What for is you scolding all the people so, papa?"—*Pearson's Weekly*.



# Scott's Emulsion

## Cod-Liver Oil



### WHAT IS SCOTT'S EMULSION ?

It is a strengthening food and tonic, remarkable in its flesh-forming properties. It contains Cod-Liver Oil emulsified or partially digested, combined with the well-known and highly prized Hypophosphites of Lime and Soda, so that their potency is materially increased.

### What Will It Do ?

It will arrest loss of flesh and restore to a normal condition the infant, the child and the adult. It will enrich the blood of the anemic; will stop the cough, heal the irritation of the throat and lungs, and cure incipient consumption. We make this statement because the experience of twenty-five years has proven it in tens of thousands of cases.

*Be sure you get SCOTT'S Emulsion.*

50c. and \$1.00, all druggists.

SCOTT & BOWNE, Chemists, New York.

**THE WOMEN KNOW BEST.**—Much comment has been caused by the official reports of the United States and Canadian governments in which are presented the evidences of the superior strength, purity, and wholesomeness of the Royal Baking Powder.

It is true that the good housewife looks upon commendations of the Royal Baking Powder from scientists and official sources such as these as very much like "the gilding of refined gold." Her practical experience long since taught her in the most convincing way the great usefulness and superiority of the Royal article. A higher proof than this she does not want and cannot have. Yet it is pleasant for her to realize that the facts established by these great competitive tests, these scientific examinations made under direction of the government, exactly parallel those she had before worked out in her own common-sense, practical way.

It does not appear that any baking powder, when presented in competition with the Royal, either at the government tests or before World's Fair juries, has ever received favor or award over the Royal or made an equal showing in purity, strength, or wholesomeness.

**A SURPRISE FOR THE OLD MAN.**—One of those big, hardy men who got into the pine woods early, endured the hardships of a pioneer, finally made a fortune, and then came to Detroit as one of the favored spots on earth in which to live, has a young son who aspires to athletic honors and has a big room in the barn equipped as a gymnasium. The old gentleman was a powerful man in his day and had to deal with refractory woodsmen, who yielded to nothing but muscular suasion. It is difficult for a person like him to realize that age draws on strength and activity.

One afternoon last week the father went by special invitation to see the gymnasium. The first thing to attract his attention was a punching-bag, one of those arrangements that comes back when you hit it, and comes back harder the harder you hit it. When its uses were explained to the old giant of the woods, he promptly announced that he'd either "bu'st the thing or knock it through the ceiling."

Drawing back as if to fell an ox, the father let go, and there was a thud as though a trolley-car had collided with an elephant. Before the air had ceased to quiver there was a quick but subdued "biff." The bag had come back, driving the puncher's cigar half-way down his throat, filling his whiskers with hot ashes, and starting the claret from his prominent nose. With such a whoop as used to waken the echoes of the North woods the old gentleman went at the bag. And the bag stayed right with him. It was literally give and take, the maddened puncher tearing around as if he was fighting bees and throwing a ton into every punch. The coachman and the stable-boy had to be called up to help part the old man and the punching-bag. Then the son had to hide the shotgun, for the puffing, used-up father vowed all kinds of vows that he would get even with that "autermatic slugger."—*Detroit Free Press.*

**THE GREATER FROM THE LESS.**—Freshy.—"Professor, is it ever possible to take the greater from the less?"

Professor Potterby.—"There is a pretty close approach to it when the conceit is taken out of a freshman."—*Indianapolis Journal.*

# HALL'S VEGETABLE SICILIAN HAIR RENEWER



## Hair Like This

Long, luxuriant, silken, soft, is the result of the use of HALL'S VEGETABLE SICILIAN HAIR RENEWER. This preparation renews the hair by renewing the conditions under which growth alone is possible.

HALL'S HAIR RENEWER feeds the hair, enriches the soil of the scalp, and so restores the color to gray and faded hair, stops hair from falling, removes dandruff, and promotes a healthy growth.

...

## From the Highest Medical Authority in Sweden.

I have had occasion to see several persons who for some time have used HALL'S VEGETABLE SICILIAN HAIR RENEWER, and know that it has restored the original color to the hair, as well as being efficient in removing the itching and dandruff that accompany the falling off of the hair. I consider it my duty to acknowledge the same.

VINCENT LUNDBERG,  
Physician in Chief to the  
King of Sweden.

...

Accept no substitute. See that every bottle bears the name of

R. P. HALL & Co.  
Nashua, N.H.



# A FINE HAIR DRESSING

**PERSUADED.**—On one occasion, when John Kemble played "Hamlet" in the country, the gentleman who played Guildenstern rather fancied himself as a musician. Hamlet asks him, "Will you play upon this pipe?" "My lord, I cannot." "I do beseech you." "Well, if your lordship insists upon it—" And, to the rage and confusion of Hamlet and the great amusement of the audience, he tooted out "God Save the King!" with variations.

**CASTLE USED AS A SCHOOL.**—The Rev. the Marquis of Normanby uses his ancestral mansion as a school. As Lord Mulgrave he evinced great interest in educating and training boys. As a teacher he began with the care of private pupils during his winterings on the Riviera. He continued the work at Mulgrave Cottage, and finally, since succeeding to the marquise in 1890, has carried it on at his ancestral castle. In the spacious court-yard a school-room sixty feet long, thirty feet broad, and twenty-five feet high has been built, and beyond this a chapel. Two old riding-schools and other out-buildings have been transformed into a gymnasium, fives court, and carpenter's shop, while close at hand are playing-fields and bathing-ground. These latter are screened from the castle lawns by thick shrubberies, and in the distance are the deer-park and endless stretches of grouse-moors belonging to the estate. The number of pupils does not exceed the limits of a single house at Eton, and at meal-times Lord Normanby presides over his young charges and the members of his staff in the old dining-hall.—*London Correspondent.*

**COST OF LIGHTS.**—The director of the electrical company of Cologne has made a comparison of the cost of the different sorts of artificial light reduced to the same standard of illuminating power. As the cost of materials for illuminating varies in different localities, he has taken the price of coal gas at ninety-one cents per thousand cubic feet, of alcohol, for use in incandescent lamps, at thirty cents a gallon, of coal oil at fifteen cents a gallon, and of electricity at one and three-quarters cents per hectowatt. Supposing the "mantles" of the incandescent gas-burners to last four hundred hours and to cost fifty cents each, and other apparatus to have the average life, he finds the most expensive ordinary light to be that from incandescent electric lamps, which cost ten cents per hour for a given amount of illumination. Next comes the light from ordinary gas-burners, with openings in the form of slits, which cost six cents for the same illumination. Argand burners are, light for light, about twenty per cent. more economical than the other sort. Next to these come incandescent lamps burning alcohol, which give light at half the price of the ordinary gas-burner. Ordinary coal-oil lamps give light much more cheaply, the cost per unit of illumination being little more than one-fifth that of incandescent electric light, but the modern gas-lights with incandescent mantles are still more economical, furnishing for one and three-quarters cents per hour the same amount of illumination as incandescent electric lamps at ten cents. Electric arc lamps are about ten per cent. more economical still, and are the cheapest sources of artificial light at present known to us.—*American Architect.*

**THE invention of mensuration and surveying** is attributed by some writers to the Egyptians, the annual overflow of the Nile carrying away landmarks and boundaries of the arable fields, necessitating surveys and the redrawing of boundary lines.

**MONDAY**  
**S** is for Sarah, so slight but so grand.  
 (Illustration: A woman in a long dress and hat)

**TUESDAY**  
**A** is for Ada, first star in our land.  
 (Illustration: A woman in a long dress and hat)

**WEDNESDAY**  
**P** for Paderewski, plays pianos for gold.  
 (Illustration: A man in a suit playing a piano)

**THURSDAY**  
**O** for Otero, the dancer so bold.  
 (Illustration: A man in a suit dancing)

**FRIDAY**  
**L** stands for Lillian, America's pride.  
 (Illustration: A woman in a long dress and hat)

**SATURDAY**  
**I** stands for Irving, who walks with a stride.  
 (Illustration: A man in a suit walking)

**SUNDAY**  
**O** stands for Others, who sing as they go.  
 (Illustration: A group of people singing)

Because they earned rest with **SAPOLIO**

**USED EVERY WEEK DAY** **BRINGS REST ON SUNDAY**

**THE STRONG POINT.**—He.—“Really, I never loved anybody before.”  
She.—“That isn’t the point. Are you sure you’ll never love anybody by and by?”—*Harper’s Bazar*.

**SAVED FROM THE WRECK.**—Everything had been swept away in the crash,—stock of goods, business house, home, even the household furniture,—and now the ruined man and his wife stood with drawn and blanched faces as the auctioneer sold to the crowd of grasping and curious strangers their household goods and treasured heirlooms. Presently he held up a rocking-horse, battered, scratched, and paintless,—the favorite plaything of their little golden-haired boy, now, alas, without even a roof to shelter him.

The woman turned pale, and the man started forward and cried, hoarsely,—  
“Not that! Oh, not that!”

A sudden silence fell upon the gay and frivolous crowd of buyers, and the auctioneer, with a suspicion of moisture in his eyes, turned and handed him the toy. There were fathers and mothers among that worldly and chattering assemblage, and that one touch of nature in the cry forced from the parent’s heart softened every soul present.

The man seized the faded rocking-horse and hurried, with the pale woman clinging to his arm, from the room.

They went to another part of the house, and he set the horse lovingly and tenderly upon the floor.

“How could you forget it?” asked the woman, reproachfully.

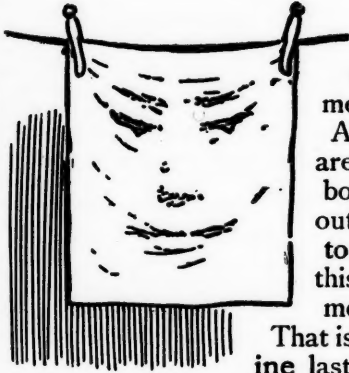
“I intended to hide it again,” said the man, “but I had no opportunity.”

He took out his knife, cut a slit in the horse’s neck, and drew out seventeen one-thousand-dollar bills neatly folded.

“Some day,” said the woman, “your carelessness is going to ruin you.”—  
*New York Sunday Journal*.

**BALDNESS.**—A French dermatologist, after years of investigation, has determined that bald-headedness is catching. He says it is a parasite and transmitted in barber-shops, or wherever brush and comb are used in common.—  
*Watertown Times*.

**RHODES AS HE IS.**—Cecil Rhodes is, in truth, the perfect type and flowering of a form of statesmanship and so-called patriotism which is too common in our day and met with in too many lands. He is nothing but a pirate in a high hat and patent-leather shoes. Laws and treaties are but jests to him. Anything he covets—be it another’s land, mines, or country—is fairly his if he can get it. Rhodes wanted to “take” the Transvaal because he “needs” it. Right and justice, honor and humanity, are things to smile at. These are the sentiments, this the huge imposture, behind the clamor in so many countries for territorial expansion, of empire and colonies and islands, simply for expansion’s sake. It is something to have the great exponent of these doctrines of selfishness and lawlessness stripped of his romance and shown to be the cruel, treacherous, reckless adventurer he is. But his counterpart exists in nearly every powerful nation of the modern world, and, whether known as Jingo, Federationist, Annexationist, or plain filibuster and pirate, is to be fought by all those who place good faith and law above lands and mines and guano beds and sugar plantations and plenty of ships and offices and enough for everybody and something left over.—*New York Evening Post*.



## Clothes-pins

make some of the holes—but most of them come from rubbing. And no matter how careful you are, the constant wear of the washboard weakens the fabric, thins it out, makes it easy to tear and pull to pieces. You can't help having this wearing process, even with the most conscientious washing.

That is why clothes washed with **Pearline** last longer. **Pearline** saves wear—saves rubbing. No washboard needed. Nothing but soaking the clothes; boiling; rinsing. <sup>553</sup>

*Millions* <sup>NOW</sup> *USE* *Pearline*

## PROVIDENT LIFE AND TRUST CO.

### OF PHILADELPHIA.

Attention is directed to the new Instalment-Annuity Policy of the Provident, which provides a fixed income for twenty years, and for the continuance of the income to the widow for the balance of her life, if she should survive the instalment period of twenty years.

In everything which makes Life Insurance perfectly safe and moderate in cost, and in liberality to policy-holders, the Provident is unsurpassed.

A GOOD CHILD is usually healthy, and both conditions are developed by the use of proper food. The Gail Borden Eagle Brand Condensed Milk is the best infant's food,—so easily prepared that improper feeding is inexcusable and unnecessary.

**A LIVING FLY-TRAP.**—"The big alligator in our menagerie," the old circus man said, "didn't always take his feed very well. Sometimes he wouldn't open his mouth at feeding-time, and then we had to resort to strategy. Alligators are very sensitive about the nose. When this alligator wouldn't open his mouth, we used to rub the top of his nose very gently. That always made him mad, and he'd throw back his upper jaw like a cellar door on hinges. Then we'd throw a chunk of beef, maybe five pounds or so, down his throat, and down would come the cellar door shut again, and he would swallow the beef. In that way we used to give him about twenty-five pounds of beef at a feeding without much difficulty.

"The old alligator was very fond of flies. You might think a fly would be pretty small game for a twelve-foot alligator, and one fly would be. But this old alligator would throw his upper jaw back and go to sleep apparently. Flies would light around inside the alligator's mouth just the same as they would anywhere out-doors, and when there were about a million there the alligator would shut his upper jaw down with the flies all inside. Pretty soon he'd throw the cellar door back and set the trap again.

"I've often thought that alligators would make good fly-traps for houses. Of course you'd want to keep any small children there might be in the house away from them, but if you looked out for that I should think they'd be great. I should say that about four twelve-foot alligators could keep a moderate-sized house free of flies all summer without the slightest trouble."—*New York Sun*.

**JOYOUS REPARTEE.**—"How do you write all those funny things?" asked the sweet young thing.

"With a typewriter," said the humorist by the day.

"Oh! I didn't know but that you might use some sort of copying process."—*Indianapolis Journal*.

**IBSEN'S MORBID STORIES.**—Ibsen's way is to represent life as a very bad, petty, and squalid muddle, and men and women generally as little, vulgar, selfish, and quite insanely inconsistent. There may be tremendous exceptions, souls of flame, reformers, but they are bound to come to grief: everybody is bound to come to grief. This is Ibsen's theory, and he rubs it in. His respectable characters are trivial fools. His young woman leaps in a second from a chattering little featherbrain to heights of revolt and indignation. All the slang of emancipation gushes at a flash from Nora's untutored lips. Hedda Gabler is a minx without a conscience or an aim, and she rules and spoils the lives of a subtly discriminated set of fools, fribbles, and Philistines. We know not why nor wherefore all this tangle and wrangle twists itself about the unintelligible minx, but this sort of thing appears to represent Ibsen's theory of life. We live out all the length of all our days and never once find ourselves on the fringes of such a set, of such a crew. So it goes on in that highly rancid drama, "Ghosts," and all the rest of it. Now, it is needless to say to any one that Shakespeare saw life steadily, and saw it whole. Hamlet is only one mood and Jaques another of the mind which created Falstaff and Launce and Bottom. There is sadness, confusion in life; there is joy, too, and one Rosalind laughs away, in one speech, all the incredible inanities of Nora and all the unqualifiable incoherencies of Hedda. But this is not a subject for seriousness.—*Saturday Review*.

## LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE.

"I have used your Dobbins' Electric Soap for two years, and would not be without it.

"MRS. E. F. FRANK, Chicago, Ill."

"I send you herewith sixty wrappers of your famous laundry soap (Dobbins' Electric), for which please send me three panel pictures.

"MRS. EDWARD J. HARDING, Biltmore, N.C."

"I use your Dobbins' Floating-Borax Soap constantly, and like it very much. It is an excellent soap for household purposes.

MRS. F. W. MORGAN, Noank, Conn."

"I have been a user of Dobbins' Electric Soap for twenty-five years, and think it is excellent.

"MRS. R. F. SANBORN, Ashland, N.H."

"I have used your very fine soap (Dobbins' Electric Floating-Borax), and think it is the best soap made for washing purposes.

"MRS. GEO. PICKARD, Newburyport, Mass."

"I have used your Dobbins' Electric Soap for the past twenty-six years or more. It is superior to all other laundry soaps.

MRS. A. K. BRYANT, Lewiston, Me."

"I have used your Dobbins' Floating-Borax Soap, and could not do without it. It is excellent for the bath and laundry.

"MISS A. B. COGAN, Putnam, Conn."

"I have used your Dobbins' Electric Soap for a number of years. It is without exception the best laundry soap I ever used.

"MRS. E. CHARON, Rutland, Vt."

"Mother thinks there is no soap equal to Dobbins' Floating-Borax for washing.

"MISS E. SEVANS, Fellowship, N.J."

"I have used your Dobbins' Floating-Borax Soap for some time, and am well pleased with it. Enclosed please find trade-marks for a silver set.

"MISS LOUISE MÜLLEE, Cincinnati, O."

"I think your Dobbins' Floating-Borax Soap is better than any I have ever used, and will do more work than two bars of any other soap.

"MRS. WM. C. HAWES, Onset, Mass."

Thousands of letters similar to the above are received by DOBBINS' SOAP MFG. CO., Philadelphia, each month. It will pay our subscribers to give these soaps a trial and see how excellent they are.



For Children While Cutting Their Teeth.

An Old and Well-Tried Remedy,

FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS.

## MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP

has been used for over FIFTY YEARS by MILLIONS of MOTHERS for their CHILDREN WHILE TEETHING, with PERFECT SUCCESS. IT SOOTHES THE CHILD, SOFTENS the GUMS, ALLAYS all PAIN, CURES WIND COLIC, and is the best remedy for DIARRHŒA. Sold by Druggists in every part of the world. Be sure and ask for **Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup**, and take no other kind.

TWENTY-FIVE CENTS A BOTTLE.

CONSUMPTION CURED.—An old physician, retired from practice, had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure of consumption, bronchitis, catarrh, asthma, and all throat and lung affections, also a positive and radical cure for nervous debility and all nervous complaints. Having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, and desiring to relieve human suffering, I will send, free of charge, to all who wish it, this recipe, in German, French, or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail, upon addressing, with stamp, naming this Magazine, W. A. NOYES, 820 Powers' Block, Rochester, New York.

THE J. WALTER THOMPSON ADVERTISING AGENCY have just issued an entirely new book on advertising.

It is a fine piece of work from cover to cover. The usually dry subject of advertising is treated in a fresh and sparkling way, and it contains scores of bright epigrams and axioms which at once appeal to the reader's common sense.

Altogether, it overshadows all the other advertising books and arguments ever published, and it should be in the hands of every progressive advertiser.

THERE are three thousand four hundred and eighty-five miles of travel between Paris and Washington City.

#### LITERARY REWARDS.

Quoth he, "Upon a story I am very much engaged,  
And I want a foreign mission, if you please."  
And they sent him to a precinct where the yellow fever raged,  
And they got rid of the novelist with ease!

Quoth he, "I am a poet, and financially have failed,  
And I want to go to Europe, for the cash."  
And they sent him to a country where the cholera prevailed,  
And they got rid of the poet in a flash!

*Atlanta Constitution.*

PROFESSOR BRIGGS ON JONAH.—Ancient Pharisical Jews thought that the predictions against the nations must be fulfilled or God could not be a God of veracity and justice. So think some dogmaticians now. But God is a God of grace. God changes his decree of destruction even though men cannot reconcile such change with divine justice and veracity. God is sovereign in his justice as well as in his mercy. The doctrine that God must be just, but may or may not be merciful, is an error that has no basis in Holy Scripture or in a sound ethical philosophy. God is as truly, by necessity of divine being, merciful as he is just. He is as free in his exercise of the one attribute as the other. He reserves the right to recall his messengers of wrath by the swifter angels of love.

Jonah represents only too well the Jew of Nehemiah's time, the Jew of the New Testament times, and also the Christian Church in its prevailing attitude to the heathen world. If the Roman Catholic Church had learned the lesson of Jonah, its theologians would not so generally have consigned the unbaptized heathen world to hell-fire. If the Reformers had understood Jonah, there would have been more of them than Zwingli and Cœlius Secundus Curio who thought that there were some redeemed heathen. If the Westminster divines had understood Jonah, they never would have coined those remarkable statements of the tenth chapter of their Confession, in which the entire heathen world and its babes are left out of the election of grace. The present century, brought face to face with the heathen world, is beginning to learn the lesson of Jonah. Jonah is the book for our times. Though written many centuries ago as a beautiful ideal of the imagination to teach the wonderful grace of God in the salvation of repenting heathen and their babes, it has been reserved for the present age to apprehend and apply its wonderful lessons. The repentance of Nineveh is a prophetic ideal.—PROFESSOR C. A. BRIGGS, D.D., in the *North American Review*.

# No Increase in Cost

The "prosperity" which has seemed to follow the advance in price of many commodities—wheat, sugar, clothing, etc.—has had no unfavorable influence upon the cost of life insurance. Thousands of dollars of life insurance may still be had

Age at Issue.	Maximum Annual Rate.	Probable Years to Live.	Probable Average Cost during Expectancy.
21	\$17.90	41	\$10.56
25	19.85	38	12.31
30	22.90	34	15.11
35	26.80	31	16.49
40	31.95	27	23.32
45	38.95	24	29.60
50	48.30	20	38.64
55	60.80	17	49.46

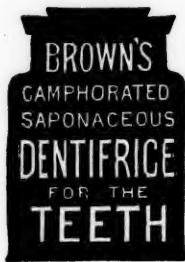
at the price which it has commanded for a series of years. Indeed, there is a tendency in rightly conducted institutions to reduce cost below previously quoted figures.

Here are some figures showing the average annual investment in an Ordinary Life Policy for \$1000, carried through the expectation of life of the insured. The investment part of the premium, together with dividend accumulations, is within the control of the insured and may be withdrawn in cash; or loans will be

made on the security of the policy; or extended insurance will be granted. The equity of the members is fully preserved.

Full particulars will be given upon request, stating age. No importunity to insure. Address the

## Penn Mutual Life, 921-3-5 Chestnut St.



**THE BEST TOILET LUXURY AS A DENTIFRICE IN THE WORLD.**

**TO CLEANSE AND WHITEN THE TEETH,**

**TO REMOVE TARTAR FROM THE TEETH,**

**TO SWEETEN THE BREATH AND PRESERVE THE TEETH,**

**TO MAKE THE GUMS HARD AND HEALTHY,**

### USE BROWN'S CAMPHORATED SAPONACEOUS DENTIFRICE.

Price, Twenty-Five Cents a Jar.

For Sale by all Druggists.

**THE MODERN SHADE ROLLER.**—Shade rollers come and go, make a splurge and a hooray, live a brief life of bluster, and go out like a run-down spring, but the Hartshorn Roller is still in the front, as it was in the beginning.

We honor the Stewart Hartshorn Company's methods, and we admire their business enterprise in not permitting their success to saturate them with a spirit of egotism. They work just as hard to this day to improve and keep up and to watch the qualities of everything going into their roller as they did the first year, when they attempted to establish a reputation. Prosperity has ruined a great many enterprises. Success has been achieved, and with it a feeling that everything has been accomplished and all hands can enjoy a rest; but this sort of prosperity has stimulated the Hartshorn people to their increased efforts, and, as a result, they are still growing and still enlarging, and their product is all the better each year. Spring shade rollers bearing the name of Stewart Hartshorn are used in every civilized country on the face of the earth.

EASY ON THE HORSES.—She told a friend about it afterward.

"The poor horses seemed all worn out," she said. "I hated to get on the car, but I couldn't help it. Anyway, I was as considerate as possible, for I sat down just as easy as ever I could, and I don't think half my weight rested on the seat."

This reminds me of the farmer in his wagon on the way to market who carried his pig on his lap, not out of affection for the pig, but that Dobbin between the shafts might have less of a load to pull.—*Boston Herald*.

TOO MANY CURES.—The sick world is growing heavy with cures. To the rest cure, the faith cure, the barefoot cure, is now added the gayety cure. To be as gay as possible is claimed to be remedial, and even preventive. Gayety sanitariums are proposed, with roof-gardens, where sick men and women may defy disease with laughter and crush the bacilli with badinage. A new philosopher garrulously, if not gravely, declares that we have too many duties. We think too much of others and not enough of ourselves. We strive to make the world better, while we ought to be making it jollier. We think and feel and do too much. The great balm is a wholesome fatuity,—a bubbling thoughtlessness.

This is a delightful theory, but there are some serious questions in the way of its glad acceptance. If it is true, the *habitués* of the vaudeville should never get Bright's disease, and heart-failure, and appendicitis, and grippe, and pneumonia. But they do. If it is true, what business have the editors of comic weeklies to have melancholia and end-men to be cut short in their career by paralysis? Why do gilded youths get asthmatic and go to the Hot Springs, where gayety never entered? It is just possible that the man who invented this cure is working a new amusement syndicate. It is even supposable that gayety kills more people than gravity. At all events, gayety isn't laid on like gas or mustard plasters; it springs in the heart when a man has done an honest day's work, or helped an honest friend, or married the girl he loves and expects to work for. Away with the fellow who would make a drug of it and then sell it!—*New York Journal*.

CARDS.—A lady's card should be thin, of fine texture, and neatly engraved with her name in the centre, her residence in the lower right-hand corner, and her reception-day, if she has one, in the lower left-hand corner.

A married lady uses her husband's Christian name on her cards, and not her own. When there are several married ladies in the family bearing the same name, the elder branch uses the surname only, as Mrs. White.—*New York World*.

CHINAMEN AND THE ANTELOPE OF INSECTS.—One of the strangest superstitions of Chinamen is the awe with which they regard the cockroach. John holds the ugly black pest as something sacred, claiming that it is specially favored by the gods, and a particular favorite of the great Joss. The most unfortunate mishap that can befall a Chinaman is to step on a cockroach. Instantly visions of terrible disasters and calamities arise before him. In some instances the superstition has been known to prey so on the minds of the Celestials as to drive them insane. As a result of this state of affairs, Chinatown is overrun with cockroaches, and a Chinaman would as soon think of killing himself as of killing one of them.—*Philadelphia Record*.



## Custom Tailoring for Women.

*Costumes, Coats, and Separate Skirts to order. Designers and tailors of the highest skill only are employed in our special order department.*

*Our Fall importations of English, French, and Scotch Cloths are complete, and embrace a superb collection of the newest and most desirable fabrics for tailor-made garments.*

*We are making a specialty of our \$40.00 full Taffeta-lined Costume. We guarantee the quality and workmanship to be the best.*

## Carpets and Rugs.

The facilities in this department for showing goods are excellent, the rooms are large and selection can be made under a natural light, which is an important feature in carpet buying. The stock is now full to overflowing with new comers. We offer

**VELVET CARPETS.**—300 rolls, the best makes, in new Fall designs, all the latest colorings. Patterns are particularly suited for rooms, halls, and stairs. Prices range from . . . . .

**BODY BRUSSELS.**—350 rolls, representing over one hundred patterns—The Bigelow, Lowell, and Whittall makes. Great variety of designs and colorings. Prices range from . . . . .

**200 NUBIA WILTON RUGS,** size, 27 x 54 inches, at . . . . .

**90 cents to  
\$1.35 per yard.**

**85 cents to  
\$1.35 per yard**

**\$1.38**

**Mail orders promptly and accurately filled.**

**STRAWBRIDGE & CLOTHIER, Philadelphia.**

**C.C. SHAYNE'S** THIS HANDSOME MINK COLLAR SENT ON RECEIPT OF ONLY \$ 10.

**BOOK**

THE AUTHORITY ON FASHIONABLE FURS

SEND 2¢ STAMP FOR MAILING TO  
The World's Leading Fur Merchant  
**C.C. SHAYNE,**  
IMPORTER-EXPORTER-MANUFACTURER  
WEST FORTY-SECOND ST. NEAR SIXTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY  
AND THE FUR BOOK WILL BE SENT YOU FREE.



**Look for  
these Labels!**

You cannot afford to use any other binding or dress edge for the skirt than the popular and incomparable

**FEDER'S  
POMPADOUR  
SKIRT  
PROTECTOR.**

(Covered by United States and Foreign Patents.)

It embellishes the daintiest gown for the most fashionable function, and is equally invaluable on the constantly-worn street costume. Always elegant and dressy, always ready to wear—always soft and pliable,—yet almost everlasting.

You know, through bitter disappointment, how long braids, cords, rubber, velveteen, and other bindings last.

Now try **FEDER'S POMPADOUR**, and you will find it to meet your most sanguine expectations.

It cleans easily,—

A shake and the dust is off,

A rub and it's clean,

A brush and it's new.

At all Dry Goods Stores, or write to

**J. W. GODDARD & SONS,  
98-100 Bleecker Street, New York.**

**Important.**—In buying Pompadour binding, take notice, for your protection, that the name **FEDER'S** is stamped on every yard.

# THE Keeley Cure

**Alcohol,  
Opium,  
Tobacco  
Using**

Produce each a disease having definite pathology. The disease yields easily to the Double Chloride of Gold Treatment as administered at the following Keeley Institutes.

**Address  
THE KEELEY  
INSTITUTE  
at either**

Toronto, Canada.  
West Haven, Conn.  
Dwight, Ill.  
Plainfield, Ind.  
Kansas City, Kansas.  
Portsmouth Building.  
Crab Orchard, Ky.  
New Orleans, La.,  
3507 Magazine St.

Portland, Me.,  
151 Congress St.  
Winnipeg, Manitoba.  
Lexington, Mass.  
Detroit, Mich.,  
50 Washington Ave.  
Minneapolis, Minn.,  
St Louis, Mo.,  
2809 Washington Ave.

Kansas City, Mo.,  
1815 Independent Ave.  
Buffalo, N. Y.,  
358 Niagara St.  
White Plains, N. Y.  
Greenboro, N. C.  
Cincinnati, Ohio,  
431 Elm St.

Harrisburg, Pa.,  
North and Capital Sts.  
Philadelphia, Pa.,  
415 No. Broad St.  
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444 5th Ave.  
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Waukesha, Wis.

*Keeley Catechism sent on application. Address the Institute nearest you.*

## The United States Government

has adopted the Keeley treatment in the Soldiers' Homes and in an institution for exclusive use of the Regular Army. **Seven States** have legislated for the application of this treatment to worthy indigent inebriates.

It is a fact, known generally by well-informed persons, that inebriety, morphine and other drug additions are *diseases*, not simply habits, and to be cured they must receive medical treatment.

The method of treatment originated by Dr. Leslie E. Keeley, and administered only at Institutes authorized by him, cures these diseases. This statement is easily substantiated by facts. Three hundred thousand cured men and women are glad to testify to its truth.

The treatment at these institutes is pleasant. The patient is subject to no restraint. It is like taking a vacation of four weeks. He only knows that he is cured.

Detailed information of this treatment, and proofs of its success, sent free upon application to any of the following Institutes:

## A NEW DISCOVERY.

"DIAMOND CRYSTAL EYE-GLASSES."



Superior to all other glasses for Reading or Distance. Will cure Weak Eyes and Poor Sight, Inflamed Lids, Pain about the Eye, Headache, Nervousness, Neuralgia, Sore Eyes. Recommended by over 200 Doctors, Lawyers, and Clergymen.

These glasses can be used for hours in the strongest light and they will not tire nor strain, but strengthen and invigorate the eyes. Glasses fitted by mail, providing you answer the following questions: *How old? Ever wear glasses? How long?*

For the next 30 days we have reduced the price of these glasses, with a warranted Gold plated frame, from \$6.50 to \$1.95.

Send in your order before this time expires; remember it expires in 30 days. Make your friend a beautiful and useful present.

These Glasses are manufactured especially for Optical Use.

Can be had only from

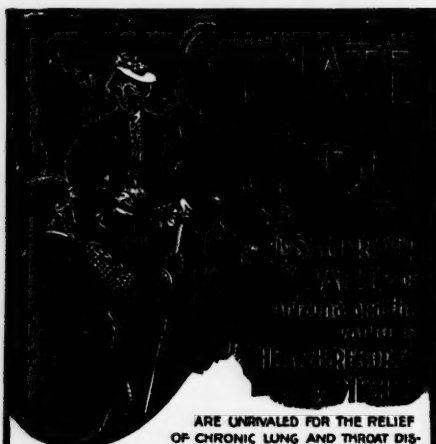
**GEORGE MAYERLE, Expert Optician, San Francisco, Cal.**

Agents' Outfit, with full instructions how to examine the eyes and fit glasses, retails for \$87.50; reduced to \$19.50 for 30 days only.

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN DIAMOND,



1-karat size, set in a substantial scarf-pin or stick-pin or shirt stud, by mail, postpaid, 25 cents; ring, 50 cents (give size). "The nearest approach to the real Diamond ever sold." That's our opinion; if it's not yours, "your money back." This remarkable offer is made that we may know you and be able to send you our catalogue of Indian relics and other wonderful curios, the products of the Rocky Mountain region. Address H. H. TAMMEN CURIO CO., Denver, Colo.



ARE UNRIVALED FOR THE RELIEF OF CHRONIC LUNG AND THROAT DISEASES. HERE ARE FOUND PURE DRY AIR, EQUABLE TEMPERATURE AND CONSTANT SUNSHINE. THE ITEMS OF ALTITUDE, TEMPERATURE, HUMIDITY, HOT SPRINGS, SANATORIUMS, COST OF LIVING, MEDICAL ATTENDANCE, SOCIAL ADVANTAGES, ETC., ARE CONCISELY TREATED IN DESCRIPTIVE PAMPHLETS ISSUED BY THE SANTA FE ROUTE. PHYSICIANS ARE RESPECTFULLY ASKED TO PLACE THIS LITERATURE IN THE HANDS OF INVALIDS.

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